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**Mobile Phone & Social Media Policy**

**MOBILE PHONES:**

The use of mobile phones is restricted in terms of where and when they may be accessed. Phones may be used in the staff room, in classrooms during breaks when there are no children present and in the various school offices. Mobile phone use is never permitted in the EYFS setting.

Mobile phones should not be used or accessed during contact time or when a member of staff is on playground duty although there may be specific occasions when permission will be granted by the Head Teacher.

The Maintenance Officer, PE staff and members of staff on trips should, however, be accessible by mobile phone in order to contact school in an emergency or be contacted if necessary; the school has a mobile phone which should be used for trips and visits whenever possible (see also staff Behaviour Policy, Privacy and the Protection of Data Policy and IT Acceptable Use Policy).

**SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY:**

A social networking site is any website which enables its users to create profiles, form relationships and share information with other users. It also includes sites which have online discussion forums, chat-rooms, media posting sites, blogs and any other social space online. It includes but is not limited to, sites such as Facebook, Bebo, Ping, Twitter and Wikipedia.  It is not intended to affect your ability to use LinkedIn for purely professional purposes.

This policy applies to the use of social media for both business and personal purposes, whether during School/working 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 or any other IT equipment.

Breach of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. Disciplinary action may be taken regardless of whether the breach is committed during working hours, and regardless of whether our equipment or facilities are used for the purpose of committing the breach. Any member of staff suspected of committing a breach of this policy will be required to co-operate with our investigation, which may involve handing over relevant passwords and login details so far as this is consistent with the right of an individual to private and family life.

Staff may be required to remove internet postings which are deemed to constitute a breach of this policy. Failure to comply with such a request may in itself result in disciplinary action (see also the school’s Privacy and Data Protection Policy and IT Acceptable Use Policy).

**Implementation of the policy**

The Head Teacher has overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy. Responsibility for monitoring and reviewing the operation of this policy and making recommendations for change to minimise risk lies with the Head Teacher and the SMT.

All staff are responsible for the success of this policy and should ensure that they take the time to read and understand it. Any misuse of social media should be reported to the Head Teacher. Questions regarding the content or application of this policy should be directed to the Head Teacher or SMT.

**Relationship with other School policies**

If an internet post would breach any of our policies in another forum it will also breach them in an online forum. For example, staff are prohibited from using social media to:

* breach our obligations with respect to the rules of relevant regulatory bodies;
* breach any obligations they may have relating to confidentiality;
* breach our Disciplinary Rules;
* defame or disparage the School or our affiliates, parents, staff, pupils, business partners, suppliers, vendors or other stakeholders;
* harass or bully other staff in any way or breach our Anti-bullying policy;
* unlawfully discriminate against other staff or third parties or breach our Equal Opportunities policy;
* breach our Data Protection policy (for example, never disclose personal information about a colleague, pupil or parent online);
* breach any other laws or ethical standards (for example, never use social media in a false or misleading way, such as by claiming to be someone other than yourself or by making misleading statements).

Behaviour online can be permanent and so staff must be extra cautious about what they say as it can be harder to retract.

Staff must also be aware of the particular risks to internet security that social media presents and so to comply with the existing School policy on internet security must take any extra measures necessary not to allow any of their actions on social media sites to create vulnerability to any School systems.

Staff who breach any of the above policies will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

**Responsible use of social media**

Staff must be aware that their role comes with particular responsibilities and they must adhere to the School's strict approach to social media.

Staff must:

* ensure that wherever possible their privacy settings on social media sites are set so that pupils cannot access information relating to their personal lives;
* seek approval from the Head Teacher before they speak about or make any comments on behalf of the School on the internet or through any social networking site;
* report to a member of the SMT immediately if they see any information on the internet or on social networking sites that disparages or reflects poorly on the School;
* immediately remove any internet postings which are deemed by the School to constitute a breach of this or any other School policy;
* consider whether a particular posting puts their effectiveness as a teacher at risk;
* post only what they want the world to see.

Staff must not:

* provide references for other individuals, on social or professional networking sites, as such references whether positive or negative can be attributed to the school and create legal liability for both the author of the reference and the school;
* post or publish on the internet or on any social networking site, any reference to the School, your colleagues, parents or pupils;
* use commentary deemed to be defamatory, obscene, proprietary, or libellous. Staff must exercise caution with regards to exaggeration, colourful language, guesswork, obscenity, copyrighted materials, legal conclusions, and derogatory remarks or characterisations;
* discuss pupils or colleagues or publicly criticise the School or staff;
* post images that include pupils;
* initiate friendships with pupils on any personal social network sites;
* accept pupils as friends on any such sites; staff must decline any pupil-initiated friend requests;
* use social networking sites as part of the educational process e.g. as a way of reminding pupils about essay titles and deadlines.

**The use of social media for School purposes**

Social media should not be used for purposes relating to the School's business or the delivery of its curriculum to pupils unless the prior authority of the Head Teacher has been obtained.

Where the use of social media is authorised for such purposes this Policy must be followed.

Any social media accounts (including blogs, forums, twitter etc), sites or pages used or set up for the purpose of furthering the School's business or facilitating the provision of the curriculum to its pupils shall remain the property of the School and the Head Teacher and SMT must have access to it.

**Personal use of social media**

Personal use of social media is never permitted by means of the school’s computers, networks and other IT resources and communications systems.

**The monitoring of social media**

The contents of our IT resources and communications systems are our property. Therefore, staff should have no expectation of privacy in any message, files, data, document, facsimile, telephone conversation, social media post conversation or message, or any other kind of information or communications transmitted to, received or printed from, or stored or recorded on our electronic information and communications systems.

We reserve the right to monitor, intercept and review, without further notice, staff activities using our IT resources and communications systems, including but not limited to social media postings and activities, to ensure that our rules are being complied with and for legitimate business purposes and you consent to such monitoring by your use of such resources and systems. This might include, without limitation, the monitoring, interception, accessing, recording, disclosing, inspecting, reviewing, retrieving and printing of transactions, messages, communications, postings, log-ins, recordings and other uses of the systems.

We may store copies of such data or communications for a period of time after they are created, and may delete such copies from time to time without notice.

Do not use our IT resources and communications systems for any matter that you wish to be kept private or confidential from the organisation.

**Social media and the end of employment**

If a member of staff's employment with our School should end, for whatever reason, any personal profiles on social networking sites should be immediately amended to reflect the fact that you are no longer employed or associated with our School.

All professional contacts that a member of staff has made through their course of employment with us belong to our School, regardless of whether or not the member of staff has made social media connections with them.

All members of staff agree that on the termination of employment they will provide to the SMT any relevant passwords and other information to allow access to any social media site, page or account which has been used or set up for the purpose of furthering the School's business or facilitating the provision of its curriculum and will relinquish any authority they may have to manage or administer any such site, page or account.

**See also:**

Staff Behaviour Policy

Pupil Behaviour and Discipline Policy

Student and Volunteer Policy

Staff Handbook

Safeguarding Policy

Privacy and the Protection of Data Policy

IT: Acceptable Use Policy

*This list is not exhaustive and other NDPS policies may apply*

***Reviewed September 2025 by S Smith***

***Approved September 2025 by K Laudan***

***To be reviewed no later than September 2026***