



Greenholm Primary School

Social Networking

(your private and work online presence)

Summary page;

Everything posted online is public, even with the strictest privacy settings. Once something is online, it can be copied and redistributed. Therefore, assume that everything that is written is permanent and can be shared, including your photos and posts on sites. As employees in a Educational Establishment *you are being searched for* by pupils, colleagues & parents.

Communication between children and adults, by whatever method, should take place within clear and explicit professional boundaries. Employees must abide by agreed method of communication policies. Adults should ensure that all communications are transparent and open to scrutiny. These rules are supplementary to our Acceptable User Policy.

Musts;

School employees are reminded that they should at all times:

- have the highest standards of personal conduct (inside and outside of School)
- ensure that their behavior (inside and outside of School) does not compromise their position within the school
- ensure that their judgment and integrity should not be able to be brought into question

Must nots;

School employees **must not** communicate, (including accepting 'friend' requests) with any current pupils of the school on social networking sites *such as* Facebook. This is applicable **even** if a school employee has permission from a pupil's parent/guardian. (This would not apply to current pupils that an individual employee is directly related to, e.g. their child, niece or nephew). School employees should not communicate with, including being 'friends' with, past pupils whilst they are below the age of nineteen - though it is our recommendation, not at all.

- Disclose private and confidential information relating to pupils, parents, other school employees, their employment directly or the school.
- Discuss or reveal any matters relating to the school, school employees, pupils or parents.
- Identify themselves as a representative of the school – without written permission from SLT and in a professional capacity



- Post any images of school employees on a social networking site before requesting permission
- Use it as a forum for raising and escalating concerns regarding the school or the Council. These concerns should be raised using the Whistle Blowing Procedure.

1. Policy statement of intent

1.1. This policy is intended to help staff make appropriate decisions about the use of social media such as blogs, wikis, social networking websites, podcasts, forums, message boards, or comments on web-articles, such as Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn and other sites in the nature.

1.2. This policy outlines the standards we require staff to observe when using social media, the circumstances in which we will monitor your use of social media and the action we will take in respect of breaches of this policy.

1.3. This policy supplements our Acceptable User Policy, Child Protection Policy, Staff Disciplinary Policy.

1.4. This policy does not form part of any contract of employment and it may be amended at any time.

2. Who is covered by the policy

2.1. This policy covers all individuals working at all levels, paygrades, job responsibility levels including senior managers, team leaders, employees, governors, consultants, contractors, trainees, homeworkers, part-time and fixed-term employees, casual and agency staff and volunteers (collectively referred to as staff in this policy).

3. The scope of the policy

3.1. All staff are expected to comply with this policy at all times to protect the privacy, confidentiality, reputation and interests of Greenholm Primary and our employees, partners, pupils and their associated guardians.

3.2. Breach of this policy may be dealt with under our Discipline and Behaviour Policy and in serious cases, may be treated as gross misconduct leading to suspension and/or dismissal.



4. Responsibility for implementation of the policy

4.1. The Headteacher on behalf of the Governors of Greenholm Primary School has overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy.

4.2. The ICT Strategy planning committee on behalf of the Governors of Greenholm Primary School is responsible for monitoring and reviewing the operation of this policy and making recommendations for changes to minimise risk.

4.3. All staff are responsible for their own compliance with this policy and for ensuring that it is consistently applied. All staff should ensure that they take the time to read and understand it. Any breach of this policy should be reported to a member of the School Leadership Team (Headteacher, Deputy head, Assistant Heads).

4.4. Questions regarding the content or application of this policy should be directed to School Leadership Team or ICT Staff.

5. Using social media sites in our name

5.1. Only the Headteacher & ICT Manager are permitted to post material on a social media website in our name and on our behalf. Any breach of this restriction will amount to gross misconduct.

6. Using work-related social media

6.1. We recognise the importance of the internet in shaping public opinion and parental interest. We also recognise the importance of our staff joining in and helping shape industry conversation and direction through interaction in social media. Online presence is often the first place parents/prospective staff/Ofsted will check for information.

6.2. Before using work-related social media you must:

- (a) have read and understood this policy and our acceptable User Policy; and
- (b) have sought and gained prior **written** approval to do so from School Leadership Team.



7. Personal use of social media sites

7.1. We permit the incidental use of social media websites for personal use subject to certain conditions set out below. However, this is a privilege and not a right. It must neither be abused nor overused and we reserve the right to withdraw our permission at any time at our entire discretion.

7.2. The following conditions must be met for personal use to continue:

- (a) use must be minimal and take place substantially out of normal working hours (that is, during lunch hours, before 8:30 am or after 5.00 pm);
- (b) use must not breach any of the rules set out in paragraph 9 below.
- (c) use must not interfere with business or office commitments;
- (d) **use must comply with our policies including the Acceptable User Policy** as your Equal Opportunities Policy, Anti-Harassment Policy, Data Protection Policy and Disciplinary Procedure.

7.3. This document does not give any implication that social sites that are blocked at a ISP level will be over ridden.

8. Rules for use of social media

Whenever you are permitted to use social media in accordance with this policy, you must adhere to the following general rules:

8.1. Always write in the first person, identify who you are and what your role is, and use the following disclaimer “The views expressed are my own and don’t reflect the views of my employer”.

8.2. Do not upload, post, forward or post a link to any abusive, obscene, discriminatory, harassing, derogatory or defamatory content.

8.3. Any member of staff who feels that they have been harassed or bullied, or are offended by material posted or uploaded by a colleague onto a social media website should inform a member of the School Leadership Team, or directly to the Chair of Governors.

9.4. Never disclose commercially sensitive, anti-competitive, private or confidential information. If you are unsure whether the information you wish to share falls within one of these categories, you should discuss this with your line manager.

9.8. When making use of any social media platform, you must read and comply with its own



terms of use.

9.9. Do not post, upload, forward or post a link to chain mail, junk mail or gossip.

9.10. Be honest and open, but be mindful of the impact your contribution might make to people's perceptions of us as a whole. If you make a mistake in a contribution, be prompt in admitting and correcting it.

9.11. You are personally responsible for content you publish into social media tools – be aware that what you publish will be public for many years. What you have locked as secure is only secure for the duration THEY decide.

9.12. Don't escalate heated discussions, try to be conciliatory, respectful and quote facts to lower the temperature and correct misrepresentations. Never contribute to a discussion if you are angry or upset, return to it later when you can contribute in a calm and rational manner.

9.13. If you feel even slightly uneasy about something you are about to publish, then you shouldn't do it.

9.14. Don't discuss colleagues, competitors, customers or suppliers without their prior approval.

9.15. Always consider others' privacy and avoid discussing topics that may be inflammatory e.g. politics and religion.

9.16. Avoid publishing your contact details where they can be accessed and used widely by people you did not intend to see them, and never publish anyone else's contact details.

9.17. Before your first contribution on any social media site, observe the activity on the site for a while before launching in yourself to get a feel for the style of contributions, the nature of the content and any 'unwritten' rules that other contributors might follow.

9.18. Activity on social media websites during office hours should complement and/or support your role.

9.19. If you notice any content posted on social media about us (whether complementary or critical) please report it to School leadership Team.

9.20 You must not encourage others to break the rules of social platforms (I,e; there are often age related restrictions)

10. Monitoring use of social media websites

10.1. Staff should be aware that any use of social media websites (whether or not



accessed for work purposes) may be monitored and, where breaches of this policy are found, action may be taken under our Disciplinary Procedure.

10.2. We reserve the right to restrict or prevent access to certain social media websites if we consider personal use to be excessive. Monitoring is only carried out to the extent permitted or as required by law and as necessary and justifiable for School purposes.

10.3. Misuse of social media websites can, in certain circumstances, constitute a criminal offence or otherwise give rise to legal liability against you and us. It may also cause embarrassment to us and to our parents/pupils/staff.

10.4. In particular uploading, posting forwarding or posting a link to any of the following types of material on a social media website, whether in a professional or personal capacity, will amount to **gross misconduct** (this list is not exhaustive):

- (a)** pornographic material (that is, writing, pictures, films and video clips of a sexually explicit or arousing nature);
- (b)** a false and defamatory statement about any person or organisation;
- (c)** material which is offensive, obscene, criminal discriminatory, derogatory or may cause embarrassment to us, our clients or our staff;
- (d)** confidential information about us or any of our staff or clients (which you do not have express authority to disseminate);
- (e)** any other statement which is likely to create any liability (whether criminal or civil, and whether for you or us); or
- (f)** material in breach of copyright or other intellectual property rights, or which invades the privacy of any person.

Any such action will be addressed under the Disciplinary Procedure and is likely to result in summary dismissal.

10.5. Where evidence of misuse is found we may undertake a more detailed investigation in accordance with our Disciplinary Procedure, involving the examination and disclosure of monitoring records to those nominated to undertake the investigation and any witnesses or managers involved in the investigation. If necessary such information may be handed to the police in connection with a criminal investigation.

10.6. If you notice any use of social media by other members of staff in breach of this policy please report it to School Leadership Team.

11. Monitoring and review of this policy

11.1. The ICT Strategy committee shall be responsible for reviewing this to ensure that it meets legal requirements and reflects best practice and is inline with our school ethos.