St. John the Baptist R.C. Primary School

Social Media Policy November 2022

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

"Love One Another"

St John the Baptist RC Primary School is a place of learning in which each individual is encouraged to fulfil their own unique potential.
We try always to remember that everyone is special and should be treated with respect.
Our Catholic faith touches every part of our school life and we try to be a community which has Jesus at the heart of all we do.

Rationale:
Social media and social networking sites play an ever-increasing role in the daily lives of many people. We recognise that sites bring risks, but equally there are many benefits to be reaped. Such sites are an instant tool that can be utilised to communicate with a wide audience. As they are an integral part of daily life it is our responsibility as educators to make our pupils aware of the risks using such sites and provide them with the necessary knowledge on how to protect themselves appropriately.

This policy:

- provides clarity to the way in which social media/mobile phones are to be used by pupils, governors, visitors, parent helpers and school staff at St. John the Baptist R.C. Primary School.

- provides guidance for parents on
    A. The use of social networking sites by pupils within school
    B. The use of social networking by staff in a personal capacity
    C. Parental comments posted on social media
    D. Dealing with incidents of online bullying

A. The use of social networking sites by pupils within school
The school's **Online Safety Policy** outlines the rules for using IT in school and these rules therefore apply to use of social networking sites. Such sites should not be used/accessed in school unless under the direction of a teacher and for

a purpose clearly apparent from the learning objective of the relevant learning experience.
The school has an active Twitter account but doesn't have a Facebook account.

- YouTube access is available for staff to use to enhance the delivery of the curriculum. All staff will take precautions and will assess the suitability of all videos and scrutinise the content of any video they intend to play, prior to presenting it within a lesson. This allows us to maintain a safe learning environment for our children whilst reaping the benefits from the YouTube platform. General YouTube access remains inaccessible for pupils.
- Children under the age of 13 are not permitted to be registered for platforms such as Facebook and Instagram.

B. 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 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.
- Staff must not post comments about the school, pupils, parents or colleagues including members of the Governing Body.
- Staff must not use social networking sites within lesson times (for personal use).
- Staff should only use social networking in a way that does not conflict with the current National Teacher's Standards.
- Staff should review and adjust their privacy settings to give them the appropriate level of privacy and confidentiality. St Joseph & St Bede RC Primary School
- Staff should read and comply with 'Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who Work with Children and Young People'.
- Inappropriate use by staff should be referred to the Headteacher in the first instance and may lead to disciplinary action.
- Staff should never use their mobile phone in school hours.
- Written permission from parents or carers will be obtained before photographs or video of pupils are published on the school Web site.

C. Comments posted by parents/carers

- Parents and carers will be made aware of their responsibilities regarding their use of social networking. Methods of school communication include the prospectus, the website, newsletters, letters 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.

- 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 are asked to agree to this in the Home School Agreement.
- Parents should make complaints through official school channels rather than posting them on social networking sites. See School Complaints Proceedure.
- Parents should not post malicious or fictitious comments on social networking sites about any member of the school community.

* Please note that parent/carers attend school events by invitation and this invitation will be withdrawn should this policy not be adhered too.

D. 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 on the school roll. In the case of inappropriate use of social networking by parents will be asked to remove such comments and seek redress through the appropriate channels such as the School Complaints Proceedure.

The Governing Body understands that, "There are circumstances in which police involvement is appropriate. These include where postings have a racist element or where violence is threatened or encouraged." Furthermore, "Laws of defamation and privacy still apply to the web and it is unlawful for statements to be written…which:

- expose (an individual) to hatred, ridicule or contempt
- cause (an individual) to be shunned or avoided
- lower (an individual's) standing in the estimation of right-thinking members of society or
- disparage (an individual in their) business, trade, office or profession." (National Association of Headteachers)

This policy should be read in conjunction with

- Online Safety Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct for Technology Use
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- School Complaints Procedure.
- Teacher Handbook

Due to the fast pace in which technology changes this policy will be reviewed annually.