



Wingate Infant School

Social Media Policy 2019/20

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. This gives clarity to the way in which social media/mobile phones are to be used by pupils, school staff, governors, visitors and parent helpers at Wingate Primary School.

There are four key areas:

1. The use of social networking sites by pupils within school
2. The use of social networking by staff in a personal or professional capacity
3. Comments posted by parents/carers
4. Dealing with incidents of online bullying

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 the use of social networking sites. Such sites should not be used/accessed in school unless under the direction of a teacher and for the purpose clearly apparent from the learning objective of the relevant learning experience. If social media sites are used then staff should carry out a risk assessment to determine which tools are appropriate. Social media sites to be used in school include blogging sites such as Facebook and Twitter. Parents will give permission for children to access these sites in school as well as permission for images of their child/child's work to be included on the site. (See Child AUP)

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. For this reason, no child should be permitted to use personal social media sites in school at any time.

The use of social networking by staff in a personal or professional 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 for staff are:

- 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 have parents/carers as 'friends' on their personal accounts. If staff have a friendship/relationship with parents/carers outside of school they **must** declare their 'online friendship' by completing the appropriate form in school.



- Staff **must not** post comments about the school, pupils, parents or colleagues (including Governors). This includes using the school name.
- Staff must not use Social Media Networking in lesson time for personal use.
- Staff should only use Social Media Networking in a way that does not conflict with the current National Teacher Standards, the school AUP and school risk policies.
- Staff should review and adjust their privacy settings to give them the appropriate level of privacy and confidentiality e.g. 'friends only' (including settings on photographs).
- Staff should read and comply with 'Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who work with Children and Young People'.
- Staff deemed to be using Social Media Networking inappropriately (including disregard for any section of this policy) should be referred to the Head Teacher in the first instance and may lead to disciplinary action.

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 school brochure, website, letters and verbal discussions.

The school Facebook page will be used to inform parents and carers of what is happening in school. Parents/Carers 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. Personal phones and cameras are not allowed to be used by parents/ carers while they are on school premises.

The school Facebook site will be a one-way communication tool and parents should be encouraged not to ask questions using the Facebook page or through the Facebook messenger option. All communication must be made through official school channels including any complaints.

Parents should not post malicious or fictitious comments on social networking sites about any member of the school community. The LA Legal Team and/or police will be contacted should this be the case

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 networking by parents, the HT/ Governing Body will contact the parent asking them to remove such comments and seek redress through the appropriate channels such as the Complaints Policy and will send a letter.

The Governing Body understands that 'there are circumstances in which police involvement is appropriate. These include where postings have 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 Head Teachers)