

Social Media Policy

Approved: June 26

To be reviewed: June 27

Raddlebarn Primary School

Social Media Policy

'Social media' includes any kind of online platform that enables people to interact with each other, therefore some games and video sharing platforms may have social media elements to them.

Raddlebarn Primary School (the School) recognises the numerous benefits and opportunities which social media offers and encourages staff, parents, carers and pupils to find creative ways to use social media at an appropriate time and in an appropriate way. However, there are some risks associated with social media use, especially around the issues of safeguarding, bullying and reputation; this policy aims to encourage the safe use of social media.

This policy:

- Should be read with the School's Staff & Parent Codes of Conduct and Acceptable Use Agreements.
- Applies to all staff and their online communications which directly or indirectly, refer to the School, posted at any time from any location;
- Takes into account of inappropriate posts made, by governors, parents and other visitors to the School, via social media that directly or indirectly refer to the School;
- Encourages the safe and responsible use of social media through training and education; and
- Is not intended to intrude upon the private use of social media by staff, parents, governors or other visitors to the School, which is not related to the School.

Scope

Professional communications are those made by the School's staff or governors through or on a School account or using the School name, in part or in its entirety. All professional communications are within the scope of this policy.

Personal communications are those made via a personal social media account or self-created group, which do not refer to the School, and are outside the scope of this policy.

Organisationalcontrol- Roles& Responsibilities

- **The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) will:**
    - Facilitate training and guidance on Social Media use; ○ Develop and implement the Social Media policy; ○ Take a lead role in investigating any reported incidents; ○ Make an initial assessment when an incident is reported and involve appropriate staff and external agencies as required;
    - Receive completed requests for Social Media accounts for School purposes; and ○ Approve or decline account creation.

- **Administrators / Moderators will:**
    - Create accounts approved by the SLT; ○ Store account details, including passwords securely; ○ Monitor and contribute to the School's accounts, as instructed; and
    - Oversee the closure or transfer of accounts after the lead staff member has left the School.
- **All staff will:**
    - Familiarise themselves with the contents of this and other relevant policies, and comply with the requirements of those policies when using social media;
    - Attend appropriate training; ○ Regularly monitor, update and manage content they have posted on School accounts;
    - Ensure that personal communications which identify the School are appropriate and include a disclaimer which make clear that when you are expressing personal views you are not acting on the School's behalf; and
    - Not follow or befriend current or former pupils on any personal social media account.

School Community – Responsibilities

- **Pupils will be:**
    - Educated by the School in the safe and responsible use of social media; ○ Supervised when viewing social media in the School; ○ Supported in line with the School's Behaviour and Safeguarding policies, including being issued with appropriate consequences, if they post offensive or inappropriate comments in social media;
- **Visitors and Parents will be:**
    - Informed about the acceptable use of the School learning platform where posting or commenting is enabled;
    - Able to take part in the School's education programme which supports the safe and positive use of social media.
    - Encouraged to comment or post appropriately about the School on social media; and ○ Expected to refrain from posting offensive or inappropriate comments on social media, please see the Parents Code of Conduct.

Process for creating new accounts

The School's staff is encouraged to consider whether a social media account will help them in their work and, if they wish to create an account, they must present a business case to the School Leadership Team which covers the following points:-

- The aims of the account;
- The intended audience;
- How the account will be promoted;
- Who will run the account, at least two people should be named;
- Whether the account be open or private/closed; and
- How they intend to keep the account a safe place and protect the School and its community.

In all cases, the SLT must be satisfied that anyone running a social media account on behalf of the School has read and understood this policy and received appropriate training before they determine whether creation of the account should be approved or declined.

The School would also encourage anyone who is not employed by the School, including volunteers and parents, to access the support provided by the above process and the good practice detailed in this policy, before creating an account that could be linked to the School.

Monitoring

The School's social media accounts must be monitored regularly and frequently by the person running the account. Any comments, queries or complaints made through those accounts must be responded to as soon as it is possible, even if the response is only to acknowledge receipt. Regular monitoring and intervention is essential in case a situation arises where bullying or any other inappropriate behaviour arises on a school social media account.

The School's administrators and SLT shall monitor these social media accounts from time to time.

Legal considerations

There are a number of ways in which posting on social media could be unlawful. In particular users of social media should:

- Consider the copyright of the content they are sharing and, where necessary, should seek permission from the copyright holder before sharing;
- Ensure that their use of social media does not infringe upon relevant data protection laws, or breach confidentiality; and
- Ensure that the information that is being posted is not inaccurate, offensive or illegal.

Handling abuse

- When acting on behalf of the School, social media users should handle abusive comments swiftly and with sensitivity, and take a screen shot to share with the SLT;
- If an online interaction becomes abusive, users should block, report and, having taken a screen shoot of the relevant comment or comments, delete the other user or their comments/posts before informing the audience exactly why the action was taken;
- If you feel that you or someone else is subject to abuse by School staff through a social media site, then this action must be reported to the School, in line with the School's complaints procedure.

Tone

The tone of content published on social media should be appropriate to the audience, whilst retaining appropriate levels of professional standards. Key words to consider when composing messages are:

- Engaging
- Conversational
- Informative
- Friendly (on certain platforms, e.g. Facebook)

Use of images

Images can be used on a School account, providing the following guidelines are strictly adhered to:

- Permission to use any photos or video recordings should be sought from relevant individuals (including parents of children). If anyone, for any reason, asks not to be filmed or photographed then their wishes should be respected;

- Under no circumstances should staff share or upload student pictures online other than via School owned social media accounts;
- Once trained, staff should exercise sound professional judgement about whether an image is appropriate to share on the School's social media accounts;
- Pupils should be appropriately dressed, not be subject to ridicule and must not be on the School's list of children whose images must not be published;
- The School has the right to delete any images where it considers it appropriate to do so.

Behaviour

The School expects all users of social media to adhere to the standards of behaviour set out in this policy and other relevant policies, such as the Visitors' Code of Conduct by behaving calmly, politely and respectfully in digital communications which could be linked to the School. This means that staff, and other users of social media:

- Must be professional and respectful at all times;
- Must not use social media to infringe on the rights and privacy of others or make insulting, hurtful or offensive comments about other members of the School community;
- Must not use School social media accounts for personal gain;
- Must maintain confidentiality, even after staff are no longer employed by the School;
- Must not post anonymously in relation to School activity;
- Must direct enquiries from journalists to the SLT immediately
- Must ensure that their conduct is appropriate by not posting, amongst other things, comments that are offensive, harassing or illegal, i.e. in breach of data protection, equality or copyright law.

If the School becomes aware of any inappropriate online conduct it will be reported as soon as possible to a senior member of staff and handled in line with the School's policies, including its disciplinary policy.

Managing inappropriate behaviour

Where the School considers that a visitor's behaviour online is inappropriate, the School's staff and governors may:

(a) Make a written record of incidents of inappropriateness.

(b) In most cases, speak privately with the person who behaved inappropriately;

(c) Conduct a formal investigation in order to establish the facts and determine what action should be taken, if any;

(d) Decide to issue:

(i) An informal warning, i.e. verbally, warn the visitor about the consequences of their behaviour;

(ii) A formal warning, i.e. in writing, warn the visitor about the consequences of their behaviour;

(iii) A ban, prohibiting the visitor from coming on to the School's premises, without permission, for a specified period; or

(iv) A report about the behaviour to the Police.

However, visitors, which includes parents, will be entitled to make representations to the governing board, in line with the School's complaints procedure, if they disagree with the decision reached by the School, but staff will be required to comply with the School's disciplinary policy.

Monitoring and review:
The Head Teacher will ask the School's governing board to review this Social Media Policy every three years, at least, and will ensure that parents and staff are informed of any changes made, via the School's newsletter and in any other that they consider necessary.
