

KING'S WOOD SCHOOL AND NURSERY

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Rationale

The widespread availability and use of social media applications bring opportunities to understand, engage, and communicate in new and exciting ways. It is important that we are able to use these technologies and services effectively and flexibly. However, it is also important to ensure that we balance this with our duties to our school, the community, our legal responsibilities and our reputation.

For example, our use of social networking applications has implications for our duty to safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults.

The policy requirements in this document aim to provide this balance to support innovation whilst providing a framework of good practice. They apply to all members of staff at the school.

The purpose of the policy is to:

- Safeguard all children
- Protect staff from unintentional exposure to risk
- Protect the school from legal risks
- Ensure that the reputation of the school, its staff and governors is protected
- Ensure that any users are able clearly to distinguish where information provided via social media is legitimately representative of the school

Definitions and Scope

Social networking applications include, but are not limited to: Blogs, Online discussion forums, Collaborative spaces, Media sharing services, 'Microblogging' applications, and online gaming environments. Examples include Twitter, Facebook, Skype, Windows Live Messenger, YouTube, Flickr, Xbox Live, Blogger, Tumblr, Last.fm, and comment streams on public websites such as newspaper sites or the BBC. They may also be apps installed on mobile phones such as (but not limited to) snapchat, Instagram and Whatsapp.

Many of the principles of this policy also apply to other types of online presence such as virtual worlds.

All members of staff should bear in mind that information they share through social networking applications, even if they are on private spaces, are still subject to copyright, data protection and Freedom of Information legislation, the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 and other legislation. They must also operate in line with the school's Equalities, Child Protection and ICT policies.

Breaches of this policy may be considered to be matters that would come within the realm of the school's conduct and discipline policy (October 2015). Particularly section 6b.

Serious breach of relevant school policies surrounding computer usage, could result in dismissal or criminal proceedings.

Acceptable Use.

Within this policy there is a distinction between use of school sanctioned social media for professional educational purposes, and personal use of social media

Use of Social Media in practice

1. Personal use of social media

- School staff should not invite, accept or engage in communications with parents or children from the school community in any personal social media whilst in employment at King's Wood School
- Any communication received from children on any personal social media sites must be reported to the designated person for child protection (Headteacher)
- Staff and students should not access social media using school equipment. School internet (bucks grid for learning) filtering prevents access to social media from the school network and any device linked to the wireless network.
- If any member of staff is aware of any inappropriate communications involving any child in any social media, these must immediately be reported as above.
- Members of the school staff are strongly advised to set all privacy settings to the highest possible levels on all personal social media accounts to ensure that the public, including parents cannot access any personal material
- All email communication between staff and members of the school community on school business must be made from an official school email account
- Staff should not use personal email accounts or mobile phones to make contact with members of the school community on school business, nor should any such contact be accepted, except in circumstances given prior approval by the Headteacher.
- Staff are advised to avoid posts or comments that refer to specific, individual matters related to the school and members of its community on any social media accounts without the express permission of the Headteacher
- Staff are also advised to consider the reputation of the school in any posts or comments related to the school on any social media accounts
- Staff should not accept any current pupil of any age or any ex pupil of the school under the age of 18 as a friend, follower, subscriber or similar on any personal social media account. In accepting ex pupils over the age of 18 staff should carefully consider the perception of the public and the motive of the ex-pupil.
- Staff should be cautious in regard to any groups that they choose to join via social media and should remember that there is an expectation that staff members will support fundamental British values at all time. Membership of groups that undermine such values will result in disciplinary action.
- Staff should take care when engaged in online gaming or any other activity where individuals are unrecognizable behind an alias and take reasonable efforts to ensure that they are not in contact with pupils, parents or other children under the age of 18.
- Staff should remember whilst online that they have a duty to report any suspicions that they have relating to Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and radicalization (the PREVENT agenda)

2. School sanctioned use of social media

There are many legitimate uses of social media within the curriculum and to support student learning. For example students can develop writing for a purpose by creating blog entries and the school may at some point choose to develop a wider social media presence. There is an expectation that affiliated organisations to the school, such as the King's Wood Connect would also broadly follow this policy.

When using social media for educational purposes, the following practices must be observed:

- Staff should set up a distinct and dedicated social media site or account for educational purposes. This should be entirely separate from any personal social media accounts held by that member of staff, and should be linked to an official school email account.
- Any school managed social media account must have the administrator details recorded with the SLT to ensure that the account can be accessed and edited in the absence of the administrator. Account details will be kept securely in the school office.
- The URL and identity of the site should be notified to the ICT leader or member of the SLT before access is permitted for students
- The content of any school sanctioned social media site should be solely professional and should reflect well on the school.
- Pupil generated content should always be checked before it is posted online.
- Staff must not publish photographs of children without the written consent of parents / carers, identify by name any children featured in photographs, or allow personally identifying information to be published on school social media accounts
- Care must be taken that any links to external sites from the account are appropriate and safe
- Any inappropriate comments on or abuse of school sanctioned social media should immediately be removed and reported to a member of SLT
- Staff should not engage with any direct messaging of students through social media where the message is not public
- All social media accounts created for educational purposes should include a link to the E- Safety and this policy on the school website. This will indicate that the account is officially sanctioned by King's Wood School.