



# **RAVENSDALE JUNIOR SCHOOL**

## **SOCIAL NETWORKING POLICY**

**2017**

**Signed:** .....

**Date Agreed:** .....

**Date of Review:** .....

# RAVENSDALE JUNIOR SCHOOL

## SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

### 1. PURPOSE OF THIS POLICY

This policy applies to all staff and governors of Ravensdale Junior School in respect of their use of social networking sites, being:

- Permanent employees
- Temporary employees on fixed term contracts
- Supply employees.
- Governors
- Parent helpers

Social media and social networking sites play an important role in the lives of many people. We recognize that sites bring risks, but equally there are many benefits. This policy gives clarity to the way in which social media and mobile 'phones are to be used by pupils, governors, visitors, parent helpers and school staff. It will also provide guidance for parents.

### 2. THE USE OF SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES BY PUPILS WITHIN SCHOOL

Such sites should not be used or 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. Social media sites such as Twitter, Facebook and Instagram are only used during internet safety lessons demonstrating privacy settings as appropriate as it is recognised that many children do access these sites at home.

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 eg. Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

### 3. USE OF SOCIAL NETWORKING BY STAFF IN A PERSONAL CAPACITY

It is likely that many staff will use social networking. It is important for all staff to protect their professional reputation by ensuring that they use their personal accounts in an appropriate manner.

#### Guidelines

- 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 present parents as "friends" into their personal accounts. Please inform your line-manager of any conflict of interest (there is an awareness that some parents are also members of staff, governors and/or personal friends).

- Staff must not post comments about the school, pupils, parents, colleagues or governors.
- When posting on websites it is also worth thinking about the impression you are creating – would your written comment or the pictures you post cause embarrassment or upset in real life? How would you feel if your present or potential employer, your colleagues or your family members saw details of your private life?
- 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.
- Staff should read and comply with “Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who Work with Children and Young People” which can be found on line.
- Inappropriate use by staff should be referred to the Headteacher in the first instance and may lead to disciplinary action.

#### **4. Investigations**

- Social network services are increasingly being used in legal and criminal investigations
- Information posted on sites such as MySpace and Facebook has been used by police (forensic profiling), to prosecute users of said sites. In some situations, content posted on MySpace has been used in court and can impact on other areas of professional life.

#### **5. 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 should make complaints through official school channels rather than posting them on social networking sites.

Parents should not post malicious or fictitious comments on social networking sites about any member of the school community.

**6. DEALING WITH INCIDENTS OF ONLINE BULLYING/INAPPROPRIATE USE OF SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES**

The School 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, the governing Body will contact the parent asking them to remove such comments and seek redress through the appropriate legal channels.

The Governing Body understands that there are circumstances in which policy 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)

Signed .....

Dated .....

Review date .....