

Overdale Infant School

Social Media Policy, Use of Mobile Phones and Digital Photography Policy

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 and mobile phones are to be used by governors, visitors, parent helpers and school staff at the School. It will also provide guidance for parents.

There are four key areas:

- A. The use of social networking sites by pupils within school**
- B. Use of social networking by staff in a personal capacity**
- C. Comments posted by parents/carers**
- D. Dealing with incidents of online bullying**

A. 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 use of social networking sites. Filtering systems in place in the school have been designed to block access to such sites.

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.

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 are 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** post information or opinions about Overdale Infant School or pictures of school events.
- 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'.(see link at end of this document).
- Inappropriate use by staff should be referred to the Headteacher in the first instance and may lead to disciplinary action.

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.

- 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. Pictures of their own children must not include images of other children from the school.
- 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.

In the case of inappropriate use of social networking by parents, the Governing Body will contact the parent asking them to remove such comments.

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)

Use of Mobile Phones and Digital Photography Policy

Children are not allowed to have mobile phones in school. If children bring a phone to school they should take it to the school office where it will be kept until the end of the school day.

Children have their photographs taken to provide evidence of their achievements for their development records (The Early Years Foundation Stage, EYFS 2007).

Staff, visitors, volunteers and students are not permitted to use their own mobile phones to take or record any images of school children for their own records during the school day.

Procedures

- Under the data protection act of 1998 school must seek parental consent to take photographs and use video recorders. Photographs will be stored on the school network which is password protected until the school ceases to operate, should this occur then all photographs will be shredded or deleted from the school network.
- Photographs are printed in the setting by staff and images are then removed from the memory.
- Photographs of children may be taken and used in accordance with parental consent obtained via the Media Permission Form.
- Often photographs may contain other children in the background.
- Events such as Sports Day, outings, Christmas and fundraising events may be recorded by video and photographs by staff and parent/carers but always in full view of all attending.
- Parents must not post photographs or video containing other children on social media websites.
- **Visitors may only use their phones in the foyer or outside the building and will be challenged if seen using a camera inappropriately or photographing children.**