



St Mary's RC Primary School

Social Media Policy

What is Social Media?

For the purpose of this policy, *Social Media* is the term commonly used for websites which allow people to interact with each other in some way – by sharing information, opinions, knowledge and interests. This term encompasses social networking sites (such as Facebook), video sharing websites (such as YouTube), micro blogging services (such as Twitter) and other web-based services such as blogs, video and audio podcasts, wikis, message boards, and photo sharing platforms (such as Instagram). This definition of social media is not exhaustive as technology develops with new ways of communicating advances every day.

For the purpose of this document the terminology *Social Media* is not exhaustive and also applies to the use of communication technologies such as mobile phones, cameras, PDAs / PSPs or other handheld devices and any other emerging forms of communications technologies.

Key Principles

Staff and Governors at St Mary's have a responsibility to ensure that they protect the reputation of the school, and to treat all members of the school family with respect.

It is important to protect everyone at St Mary's from allegations and misinterpretations which can arise from the use of social networking sites.

Safeguarding children is fundamental to everything we do at school and it is essential that everyone at St Mary's considers this and acts responsibly if they are using social networking sites out of school.

Anyone working in the school either as a paid employee or volunteer must not communicate with children via social networking.

This policy relates to social networking inside and outside of work.

Blogging and accessing social networking sites at work using school equipment is not permitted unless on behalf of the school and with the permission of the Headteacher and Governing Body.

Code of Conduct for Staff, Governors and Volunteers at St Mary's RC Primary School

The following are not considered acceptable at St Mary's:

- The use of the school's name, logo, or any other published material without written prior permission from the Headteacher. This applies to any published material including the internet or written documentation.
- The unauthorised posting of any images of employees, children, governors or anyone directly connected with the school whilst engaged in school activities.
- The posting of any communication or images which links the school to any form of illegal conduct or which may damage the reputation of the school. This includes defamatory comments.
- The disclosure of confidential or business-sensitive information; or the disclosure of information or images that could compromise the security of the school.
- Staff requesting to become a 'friend' of a school pupil on their social networking site.

- Staff accessing social networking sites of pupils or accepting an invitation to 'friend' a pupil.

Guidance for parents/guardians

- Please refrain from the use the school name, logo or images of any children/staff/parents on any social media platform without the expressed consent of the Headteacher of St Mary's.
- Do not make any derogatory, defamatory, rude, threatening or inappropriate comments about the school, or anyone at/or connected with the school.
- Please use existing channels for home-school communication and contact school if you feel ill-informed about school life, rather than using Social Media.

Potential and Actual Breaches of the Social Media Policy

In instances where there has been a breach of this Policy, the following will apply:

Any breaches of this policy will be fully investigated. Where it is found that there has been a breach of the policy this may result in action being taken. A breach of this policy for staff will be considered to be a serious disciplinary offence which is also contrary to the school's ethos and principles.

The Governing Body will take appropriate action in order to protect the school's reputation and that of its staff, parents, governors, children and anyone else directly linked to the school.

Michael Currie

Chair of Governors