

Giffards Primary School

Social Networking Policy

This policy was developed in the Autumn term 2010 through a process of consultation

Agreed by Governors

January 2011

Reviewed February 2012/March 2013, reviewed March 2015 and November 2016

Next Review date November 2018

Signed by Chair of Governors _____ Date _____

(To be reviewed bi-annually)
Introduction to the Policy

The school is aware and acknowledges that increasing numbers of adults and children are using social networking sites.

The widespread availability and use of social networking application bring opportunities to understand, engage and communicate with audiences in new 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 reputation.

This policy and associated guidance is to protect staff and advise school leadership on how to deal with potential inappropriate use of social networking sites.

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.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure:

- That the school is not exposed to legal risks
- That the reputation of the school is not adversely affected
- That our users are able to clearly distinguish where information provided via social networking applications is legitimately representative of the school.

Facebook is targeted at older teenagers and adults. They have a no under 13 registration policy and recommend parental guidance for 13 to 16 year olds.

The following are extracts from Facebook privacy policy:

“If you are under age 13, please do not attempt to register for Facebook or provide any personal information about yourself to us. If we learn that we have collected personal information from a child under age 13, we will delete that information as quickly as possible. If you believe that we might have any information from a child under age 13, please contact us”

“We strongly recommend that minors 13 years of age or older ask their parents for permission before sending any information about themselves to anyone over the Internet and we encourage parents to teach their children about safe internet use practices.

Materials to help parents talk to their children about safe internet use can be found on this help page”

MSN and other sites recommend 13 but do not appear to have a policy of debarring younger pupils. There are many primary age pupils active on MSN and other sites This guidance is to advise and protect staff from accusations of improper relationships with pupils:

SCOPE

This policy covers the use of social networking applications by all school stakeholders, including, employees, Governors and pupils. These groups are referred to collectively as ‘school representatives’ for brevity.

The requirements of this policy apply to all uses of social networking applications which are used for any school related purpose and regardless of whether the School representatives are contributing in an official capacity to social networking applications provided by external organisations.

Social networking applications include, but are not limited to:

- Blogs, for example Blogger
- Online discussion forums, such as netmums.com
- Collaborative spaces, such as Facebook
- Media sharing services, for example YouTube
- ‘Micro-blogging’ applications, for example Twitter

All school representatives 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 the most up to date Freedom of Information legislation, the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act and other legislation. They must also operate in line with the School’s Equality and Diversity Policy.

Social networking

See Code of Conduct Policy

Use of Social networking sites in worktime

Restricted personal use only during lunch hour and after work

Social Networking as part of School Service

All proposals for using social networking applications as part of a school service (whether they are hosted by the school or by a third party) must be approved by the Head teacher first

Use of social networking applications which are not related to any school services (for example, contributing to a wiki provided by a professional association) does not need to be approved by the Head teacher. However, school representatives must still operate in line with the requirements set out within the policy.

Guidance/protection for staff on using social networking

- Exercise care with privacy settings and personal profile content, to ensure that posted content does not reflect poorly on the school in any way or otherwise create a conflict of interest. Content should be placed thoughtfully and periodically reviewed.
- Changes should be made when necessary to privacy settings to limit access to profiles and searchability
- To make it difficult for others to access information about your private life, make certain that your personal social networking profile is set to "private" and that personal information is not available to "friends of friends" or other peripheral contacts.
- Be safe online. Never give out personal information, including, but not limited to, last names, phone numbers, addresses, exact birth dates, and pictures. Do not share your password with anyone besides your teachers and parents.
- Be aware of what you post online. Social media venues are very public. What you contribute leaves a permanent digital footprint for all to see. Do not post anything you wouldn't want friends, parents, teachers, or a future employer to see, as you can't control posted data once it is on the web.
- How you represent yourself online is an extension of yourself. Do not misrepresent yourself by using someone else's identity.
- Do not post any photo or video taken on mobile phones when on school property
- Do not identify yourselves as employees of Giffards in your personal web space. This is to prevent information on these sites from being linked with the school and to safeguard the privacy of staff members, particularly those involved in providing sensitive services.
- School email addresses and other official contact details should not be used for setting up personal social media accounts or to communicate through such media.

Guidance/protection for Pupils on using social networking

- No pupil under 13 should be accessing social networking sites. This is the guidance from both Facebook and MSN. There is a mechanism on Facebook where pupils can be reported via the Help screen; at the time of writing this policy the direct link for this is:
http://www.facebook.com/help/contact.php?show_form=underage
- No pupil may access social networking sites during the school working day

- All mobile phones must be handed into the class teacher at the beginning of the school day, the Internet capability must be switched off. Failure to follow this guidance will result in a total ban for the student using a mobile phone
- No pupil should attempt to join a staff member's areas on networking sites. If pupils attempt to do this, the member of staff is to inform the Headteacher. Parents will be informed if this happens
- No school computers are to be used to access social networking sites at any time of day.
- Be safe online. Never give out personal information, including, but not limited to, last names, phone numbers, addresses, exact birth dates, and pictures. Do not share your password for anything with anyone besides your teachers if a program is being used in school and parents.
- Do not post any photo or video taken on mobile phones when on school property
- Any attempts to breach firewalls will result in a ban from using school ICT equipment other than with close supervision
- Please report any improper contact or cyber bullying to you tutor / class teacher in confidence as soon as it happens.
- We have a zero tolerance to cyber bullying

Child Protection guidance

If the head teacher receives a disclosure that an adult employed by the school is using a social networking site in an inappropriate manner as detailed above they will:

- Record the disclosure in line with our Child Protection policy
- Refer the matter to the LADO who will investigate via Essex Police Child Protection Team.
- If the disclosure has come from a parent, take normal steps to calm the parent and explain processes
- If disclosure comes from a member of staff, try to maintain confidentiality
- The LADO will advise whether the member of staff should be suspended pending investigation after contact with the police. It is not recommended that action is taken until advice has been given.

- If disclosure is from a child, follow our normal process in your Child Protection policy until the police investigation has been carried out

Cyber Bullying

By adopting the recommended no use of social networking sites on school premises, Giffards Primary School protects themselves from accusations of complicity in any cyber bullying through the provision of access.

Parents should be clearly aware of the school's policy of access to social; networking sites.

Where a disclosure of bullying is made, schools now have the duty to investigate and protect, even where the bullying originates outside the school.

This can be a complex area, and these examples might help:

A child is receiving taunts on Facebook and text from an ex pupil who moved three months ago: This is not a school responsibility, though the school might contact the new school to broker a resolution.

A child is receiving taunts from peers. It is all at weekends using MSN and Facebook. The pupils are in the school: The school has a duty of care to investigate and work with the families, as they attend the school.

A child is receiving taunts from peers. It is all at weekends using Facebook. The pupils are in Y5: This is the tricky one. The school has a duty of care to investigate and work with the families, as they attend the school. However, they are also fully within their rights to warn all the parents (including the victim) that they are condoning the use of Facebook outside the terms and conditions of the site and that they are expected to ensure that use of the site stops. At any further referral to the school the school could legitimately say that the victims and perpetrators had failed to follow the schools recommendation. They could then deal with residual bullying in the school, but refuse to deal with the social networking issues.

Once disclosure is made, investigation will have to involve the families. This should be dealt with under the school's adopted anti bullying policy.

If parent / carers refuse to engage and bullying continues, it can be referred to the police as harassment

This guidance can also apply to text and mobile phone cyber bullying.