



# Blue Gate Fields Infant School

## Parent and community use of social media policy

Agreed by staff  
Agreed by governors

June 2017

Review in June 2019

## Parent and community use of social media

We believe this policy should be a working document that is fit for purpose, represents the school ethos and enables consistency and quality across the school. This policy applies to all members of the school community and relates to the following legislation:

- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- Children's Act 1989
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Equality Act 2010

The following documentation is also related to this policy:

- *Dealing with Allegations of Abuse against Teachers and other Staff: Guidance for Local Authorities, Headteachers, School Staff, Governing Bodies and Proprietors of Independent Schools (DfE)*
- *Equality Act 2010: Advice for Schools (DfE)*
- *Keeping Children Safe in Education: Statutory Guidance for Schools and Colleges (DfE)*
- *Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 Years. Statutory Guidance for Organisations Who Work With and Support Children and Young People with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (DfE) and (DoH)*
- *Working Together to Safeguard Children: A Guide to Inter-agency Working to Safeguard and Promote the Welfare of Children*

We acknowledge that social media has become part of everyday life with many people of all ages using social media sites such as Facebook, MySpace, Twitter, You Tube and Flickr on a daily basis. Social media can be accessed through a computer or mobile phone and allows people to stay in touch with each other.

We believe that social media offers many benefits for teaching and learning and also opportunities to engage, communicate and collaborate positively with pupils, parents and the wider community. The benefits of using social media outweigh the negative concerns that many have with research showing that the most discussed topics on these sites by young people are those dealing with homework and lessons.

We have a duty to safeguard all members of the school community as we realise there are risks to the use of social media with some users posting unsafe and inappropriate material, making abusive comments and using social media to groom and abuse children.

We believe we have in place an excellent online safety policy with practices and procedures fully embedded across the school with appropriate up to date awareness training in place for school personnel, pupils, parents/carers and governors led by the designated e-Safety lead.

We actively encourage the positive use of social media in order to enhance the curriculum and learning, to enable parents to access school information, and in marketing the school effectively by promoting and explaining our values, aims and work. However, we remind all members of the school community that when using this social media platform that they do not make derogatory comments about the school or anyone connected with it.

We encourage and advise parents and others to speak directly to the Headteacher if they wish to make a complaint rather than using social media to make allegations against any aspect of the school, school personnel, pupils or anyone associated with the school.

We support all school personnel and will ensure that any abusive comments made about them on social media by pupils or parents/carers that are brought to our attention will be taken very seriously and will be reported to the appropriate authorities. We have a duty of care to ensure the safety and the well-being of pupils and school personnel.

We are aware that we cannot monitor every online comment made about the school whether they are positive or negative but we can work hard to ensure that parents/carers realise the benefits of using social media in order to engage, communicate and collaborate positively with the school.

We wish to work closely with the School Council and to hear their views and opinions as we acknowledge and support Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child that children should be encouraged to form and to express their views.

We believe it is essential that this policy clearly identifies and outlines the roles and responsibilities of all those involved in the procedures and arrangements that is connected with this policy.

## **Aims**

- To promote the benefits of social media with parents, pupils and school personnel.
- To use social media in order to engage, communicate and collaborate positively with pupils, parents and the wider community.
- To encourage the positive use of social media in order to enhance the curriculum, learning and communicating with parents.
- To safeguard all members of the school community as we realise there are risks to the use of social media.
- To ensure procedures are in place to deal with inappropriate or unlawful use of social media against all members of the school community and its associates.
- To share good practice within the school and with other schools.
- To ensure compliance with all relevant legislation connected to this policy.
- To work with other schools and the local authority to share good practice in order to improve this policy.

### **Responsibility for the policy and procedures**

#### **Role of the Governing Body**

The Governing Body has:

- appointed a member of staff to be responsible for e-Safety;
- delegated powers and responsibilities to the Headteacher to ensure all school personnel and stakeholders are aware of and comply with this policy;
- responsibility for ensuring full compliance with all statutory responsibilities;
- responsibility for the effective implementation, monitoring and evaluation of this policy.

#### **Role of the Head teacher and SLT**

The Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team will:

- ensure the safety and e-Safety of all members of the school community;
- ensure all school personnel, pupils and parents are aware of and comply with this policy;
- discuss the benefits of social media
- discuss the negative and inappropriate use of social media by parents
- discuss what is acceptable to post online
- discuss how adverse comments posted online can affect the reputation of the school
- how adverse comments posted online can affect the reputation of individual members of the school personnel
- how parents can monitor how their children are using social media

- how we deal with the inappropriate use of social media by parents against the school
- how parents must use the 'traditional' complaints process rather than making a complaint by using social media
- monitor the number of:
  - allegations made about school personnel
  - complaints made about the school
  - complaints made about school personnel
  - defamatory statements made about the school
  - defamatory statements made about school personnel
  - negative or offensive comments made about school personnel
  - racist or homophobic comments
  - comments which threaten violence
  - unauthorised photographic images taken by parents/carers or pupils that are posted online of school personnel
- deal with online complaints made by parents/carers by:
  - supporting and reassuring school personnel that allegations/comments etc will be investigated and dealt with
  - establish what has been posted online and gather evidence
  - meet with those who have made allegations/comments to establish the reason of the online comments
  - requesting and ensuring the offending online posts are removed
  - ensuring parents/carers are aware that any existing comments or any further posts could lead to legal action
  - arranging a further meeting this time with the chair of governors and the parents/carers if the matter is not resolved
  - discussing the way forward to resolve the problem
  - taking legal advice if the situation continues
- ensure the Home-School Agreement includes a statement asking parents not to use social media to make derogatory or malicious allegations about the school or anyone in the school community or to discuss sensitive school issues online;
- ensure the Acceptable User policy is current
- ensure the Complaints policy is current and available to parents/carers;
- ensure regular checks are made to ensure that the filtering methods selected are appropriate, effective and reasonable;

### **Role of the ICT manager**

The ICT manager will:

- be responsible for the day to day e-Safety issues;
- undertake an annual e-safety audit in order to establish compliance with local authority guidance;
- ensure that all Internet users are kept up to date with new guidance and procedures;
- have editorial responsibility of the school Web site and will ensure that content is accurate and appropriate;
- ensure regular checks are made to ensure that the filtering methods selected are appropriate, effective and reasonable.
- reports all e-Safety incidents to the Headteacher;
- ensure e-Safety is embedded in all aspects of the curriculum and other school activities;
- provide guidance and support to all staff;

### **Role of school personnel**

School personnel will:

- comply with all aspects of this policy
- report to the Headteacher any online allegations made about them;
- before using any Internet resource in school must accept the terms of the 'Responsible Internet Use' statement;
- report any unsuitable website or material to the ICT manager;
- ensure e-Safety is embedded in all aspects of the curriculum and other school activities;

### **Role of parents / carers**

Parents/carers will:

- be aware of and comply with this policy;
- support the school by using social media responsibly;
- not make online allegations against anyone in the school community;
- be aware that they must use the Complaints policy to make a complaint against the school;

### **Role of pupils**

Pupils will be aware of this policy and will be taught to:

- use the Internet for research;
- report any offensive e-mail;
- report any unsuitable website or material to the ICT manager;

- know and understand the school policy on the use of digital cameras

### **Internet filtering and use**

We have a contract with a reputed and national Internet provider to manage a secure and filtered Internet service which enables us to safely access and use the Internet and all email. The Internet filtering service will be annually reviewed.

Access to the Internet is designed to protect pupils and school personnel by blocking the following content:

- adult content containing sexually explicit images
- violent content containing graphically violent images
- hate material content promoting violence or attack on individuals or institutions on the basis of religious, racial or gender grounds
- illegal drug taking content relating to the use or promotion of illegal drugs or the misuse or prescription drugs
- gambling content relating to the use of online gambling websites
- non educational websites such as social networking sites

All users access the Internet in accordance with the School's Acceptable Internet Use & Agreement and will inform the ICT manager if at any time they find they have accessed inappropriate Internet sites.

When inappropriate material has been accessed the Internet Service Provider will be contacted and if necessary the Police.

### **Monitoring the implications and effectiveness of the policy**

The practical application of this policy will be reviewed annually or when the need arises by the Headteacher and ICT manager.

**This policy was agreed in June 2018 by the governing body and signed by the chair of governors. ....**

**It will be reviewed in June 2021.**

