



Lache Primary School

Social Networking Policy



September 2020 Review: September 2022

Rationale

The widespread availability and use of social media applications brings opportunities to understand, engage, and communicate in new and exciting 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 duties to our school, the community, our legal responsibilities and our reputation. 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. They apply to all members of staff at the school.

The purpose of the policy is to:

- Protect the school from legal risks
- Ensure that the reputation of the school, its staff and governors is protected
- Safeguard all children
- Ensure that any users are able clearly to distinguish where information provided via social media is

legitimately representative of the school

Definitions and Scope

Lache Primary School has a twitter account and Weduc (parent comms), which has been effective for communicating to many parents but not all. We feel that the addition of a carefully managed Facebook account would be hugely beneficial to ensure that all parents are notified of key messages in a prompt manner.

All members of staff should bear in mind that information they share through social networking applications, even if they are on private spaces, are still subject to data protection and Freedom of Information legislation, the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 and other legislation. They must also operate in line with the school's Safeguarding and ICT Acceptable Use Policies.

Use of Social Media in practice

1. Personal use of Social Media

- School staff are not permitted to invite, accept or engage in communications with parents or children from the school community in any personal social media whilst in employment at Lache Primary School. Any exceptions due to family connections etc. must be approved by the Head teacher.
- Any communication received from children on any personal social media sites must be reported to the designated person for Child Protection (Head teacher)
- If any member of staff is aware of any inappropriate communications involving any child in any social media, these must immediately be reported as above

- All email communication between staff and members of the school community must be made via Weduc.
- Staff should not use personal email accounts or mobile phones to make contact with members of the school community on school business, nor should any such contact be accepted, except in circumstances given prior approval by the Head teacher. E.g Whilst on residential trips.
- Staff and parents are advised to consider the reputation of the school in any posts or comments related to the school on any social media accounts. Comments made will be sent to a staff account to be agreed before being published
- Staff should not accept any current parent, pupil of any age or ex-pupil of the school under the age of 18 as a friend, follower, subscriber or similar on any personal social media account.
- The schools **Facebook** account will be used initially to publicise and inform parents. Rather than day-to-day updates from each class. The member of staff responsible for the account will (K.Southworth) will post a “weekly roundup” on a Friday of each week. This will be reviewed termly.

2. School-Sanctioned use of Social Media

When using social media for educational purposes, the following practices must be observed:

- Staff have set up a distinct and dedicated social media site or account for educational and communication purposes. This is entirely separate from any personal social media accounts held by any member of staff, and will be linked to an official school email account / website.
- The content of our Facebook page will be solely professional relating to the life of the school.
- Staff must not publish photographs of children without the written consent of parents / carers.
- Staff must not identify by name any children featured in photographs, or allow personally identifying information to be published on school social media accounts
- Care must be taken that any links to external sites from the account are appropriate and safe
- Any inappropriate comments on or abuse on the Facebook page should immediately be removed and reported to the Head teacher.