



# St Augustine's Catholic Primary School

## Policy for Social Networking

### **Introduction**

Social media and social networking sites play an important role in the lives of many children. The widespread availability and use of social networking sites 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 the safety of children and staff. This document gives clarity to the way in which social media are to be used by pupils, adults and school staff at St Augustine's Catholic Primary School.

### **The Use of Social Networking Sites by Pupils Within School**

- No pupil may access social networking sites during the school working day;
- No pupils may use a mobile phone on the school site;
- No school computers or other technologies are to be used to access social networking sites at any time of the day;
- Pupils must report any improper contact or cyber bullying to the class teacher straightaway.

### **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 and safety 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;
- Staff must not post pictures of school events without the Head Teacher's consent;
- Staff must not use social networking sites within lesson times;
- Staff should 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 must not post negative comments about the school, pupils, parents or colleagues including Governors.

### **Creation of Network Accounts by Staff For Use in Education**

All social media services must be approved by the Head Teacher in advance of any educational work being undertaken. Blogs, wikis and email should be undertaken only through the use of KLZ accounts.

## **Comments and Images Posted by Parents/Carers**

Methods of school communication include the prospectus, the website, KLZ, newsletters, letters and verbal discussion.

- Parents must have the permission of the Headteacher to take images of children whilst these children are taking part in a school event, on trips or representing the school in any way;
- Parents must not post pictures of pupils other than their own children on social networking sites;
- Parents should not post malicious or fictitious comments on social networking sites about any member of the school community.

## **Dealing With Incidents of Cyber Bullying**

Cyber bullying includes sending or posting harmful or upsetting text, images or other messages using the internet, mobile phones or other communication technology.

It can take many forms, but can go even further than face to face bullying by invading home and personal space.

Cyber bullying can include threats, intimidation, harassment, defamation, exclusion, rejection, impersonation and unauthorised publication of private information and images across age groups including pupils, staff and others. It can include messages intended as jokes, but which have a harmful or upsetting effect.

Any incidences of cyber bullying will be dealt with through the school's Anti-Bullying Policy.

## **Safeguarding of Children**

Use of mobile phones and digital photography policy:

Children have their photographs taken to provide evidence of their achievements. 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.

Under the Data Protection Act of 1998 school must seek parental consent to take photographs and use video recorders.

- Photographs may only be stored on the school network which is password protected;
- The school's digital cameras must not leave the school setting unless on an education visit;
- Photographs are printed in the setting by staff;
- Photographs may be taken during indoor and outdoor play and learning and displayed in albums or on boards in school;
- 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 and only with permission of the Headteacher. Parents must not post photographs or video containing other children on social media websites.

On occasion the school might like to use photographs of children taking part in an activity to promote the school via the website and KLZ, however in this instance; specific parental permission will be required.

Many mobile phones have built in cameras so staff mobile phones must not be used to take pictures of children in our school. Visitors may only use their phones in the foyer, staffroom or outside the building and should be challenged and reported to the school's Designated Child Protection Officer and School Office if seen using a camera inappropriately or photographing children.

- Staff are asked not to make or receive personal calls during their working hours;
- All school cameras and videos should be kept securely at all times and used with appropriate authority.