



## **Social Media Code of Conduct for Everyone\* at St Catherine's Church of England School**

### **Aims**

- To set out the key principles and code of conduct expected of all members of staff, Governors and volunteers at St Catherine's C of E School with respect to social networking.
- To further safeguard and protect children and staff.

### **Introduction**

Social networking activities conducted online outside work, such as blogging, involvement in social networking sites such as Facebook, and posting material, images or comments on sites such as 'You Tube' can have a negative effect on an organisation's reputation or image. In addition, St Catherine's C of E School has a firm commitment to safeguarding children in all aspects of its work. This policy has been written to set out the key principles and code of conduct that we expect of every member of our school community with respect to their responsibilities in connection with the use of social networking sites.

### **Key Principles**

- Everyone at our school has a responsibility to ensure that they protect the reputation of the school, and to treat colleagues and members of the school with professionalism and respect.
- It is important to protect everyone at our school from allegations and misinterpretations which can arise from the use of social networking sites.
- Safeguarding children is a key responsibility of all members of staff and it is essential that everyone at our school 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 school pupils or their parents via social networking and must not accept or initiate Facebook friend requests from pupils enrolled at the school or their parents.
- This policy relates to social networking outside work. Blogging and accessing social networking sites using school equipment is not permitted at any time.

The following are **not considered acceptable** at St Catherine's C of E School:

The use of the school's name, logo, or any other published material without prior permission from the Head of School. This applies to any published material either on the internet or in written documentation.

- 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 or comments that contain unacceptable language.

- The disclosure of confidential or business-sensitive information; or the disclosure of information or images that could compromise the security of the school.
- The posting of any images of employees, children, or anyone directly connected with the school whilst engaged in school activities except by a designated person for agreed publicity use.

**In addition to the above everyone at St Catherine's C of E School ensure that they:**

- Do not make any derogatory, defamatory, rude, threatening or inappropriate comments about the school, or anyone at or connected with the school.
- Use social networking sites responsibly and ensure that neither their personal/professional reputation, or the school's reputation is compromised by inappropriate postings.
- Are aware of the potential of on-line identity fraud and to be cautious when giving out personal information about themselves which may compromise their personal safety and security.
- Do not divulge confidential information or discuss issues relating to staff or pupils.
- Personal contact details including email, home or mobile numbers should not be given unless the need to do so is agreed by the head teacher or head of school.
- Social networking sites should be set to the highest privacy settings.
- Do not initiate or accept a Facebook friend requests with pupils or parents.

### **Potential and Actual Breaches of the Code of Conduct**

In instances where there has been a breach of the above Code of Conduct, the following will apply:

- It is the professional duty of all members of the school community to report to the Head teacher or Head of School if there are any breaches to this policy at the earliest possible opportunity.
- The school 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.
- Any breaches of this policy will be fully investigated. Where it is found that there has been a breach of the policy, this will result in action being taken under the school's disciplinary procedure. This will be considered to be a serious disciplinary offence which is also contrary to the school's ethos and principles.

*\*In the context of this policy "everyone" refers to members of staff, contracted staff through a third party, governors and anyone working in a voluntary capacity at the school.*

This policy will be available for all staff via the school website and will also be part of our staff/supply teacher induction.