



Social Networking Policy

Reviewed January 2023



Teagues Bridge Primary School

SOCIAL NETWORKLING POLICY

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| Written on: | 12 th September 2017 |
| Reviewed | 17 th January 2023 |
| Staff Responsibility | Mrs S. Abdulla |
| Governor responsibility | Rose Gregory |

Rationale:

At Teagues Bridge Primary School we are aware and acknowledge that increasing numbers of adults and children are using social networking sites. The widespread availability and use of social media bring opportunities to understand, engage and communicate in new ways.

It is important, however, that we can use these technologies and services respectfully and safely. This policy, alongside the Child Protection and ICT policies, is to protect our school community and to give advice on how to deal with potential inappropriate use of social networking sites. It should also be read alongside the Safeguarding Children Board: Raising Awareness document which is attached at the end of the policy.

We recognise that use of social networking application has implications for our duty to safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults.

INTRODUCTION

- The internet provides a range of social media tools that allow users to interact with one another, for example from rediscovering friends on social networking sites such as *Facebook* to keeping up with other people's lives on *Twitter* and maintaining pages on internet encyclopaedias such as *Wikipedia*.
- While recognising the benefits of these media for new opportunities for communication, this policy sets out the principles that Teagues Primary School ("School") staff and contractors are expected to follow when using social media.
- It is crucial that pupils, parents and the public at large have confidence in the school's decisions and services. The principles set out in this policy are designed to ensure that staff members use social media responsibly so that confidentiality of pupils and other

staff and the reputation of the school and Telford & Wrekin Council ("Council") are safeguarded.

- Staff members must be conscious always of the need to keep their personal and professional lives separate.

Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that:

- Teagues Bridge Primary School, it's leaders and Governors are not exposed to legal risks
- The reputation of Teagues Bridge community is not adversely affected
- All children are safeguarded

Terms of use:

It is widely acknowledged that social networking plays a substantial role in the lives of pupils and adults, but equally misuse of these applications can cause great damage to the morale and well-being of students, parents and staff.

Social networking applications include, but are not limited to:

- Blogs
- Online discussion forums
- Collaborative spaces (e.g. Facebook)
- Media sharing sites (e.g. youtube)
- Micro-blogging applications (e.g. Twitter)

All members of a school community, including parents have an obligation to use social networking in a responsible way and should bear in mind that information shared through these applications is still subject to copyright, data protection, freedom of information legislation, and other legislation including the protection from Harassment Act 1997, Malicious Communications Act 1988, Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 and the Communications Act 2003.

The children at Teagues Bridge Primary School have an acceptable use agreement/Safety rules which are taught by members of staff. These are available in the ICT/Internet policy and are published on the school website and in the school prospectus. E-safety education begins as soon as a child enters school and is a planned part of our taught ICT program. If

any child breaches these e-safety rules, including cyberbullying, then appropriate action is taken. This could include:

- Informing parents
- Further planned learning around e-safety
- Report to the Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Completion of a cyberbullying incident form

All Telford and Wrekin Schools endorse the rights to freedom of expression; however, the use of social networks must pay due consideration to the rights of others and be in accordance with the following code of conduct

Principles:

Be Professional, Responsible and Respectful

You must always be conscious , of the need to keep your personal and professional lives separate. You should not put yourself in a position where there is a conflict between your work for the school or Council and your personal interests.

You must not engage in activities involving social Media which might bring Teagues Bridge Primary School or the Council into disrepute.

You must not represent your personal views as those of Teagues Bridge or the Council on any social medium.

You must not discuss personal information about pupils, Teagues Bridge or Council staff and other professionals on social media.

You must not use social media and the internet in any way to attack, insult, abuse or defame pupils, their family members, colleagues, other professionals, other organisations, Teagues Bridge Primary School or the Council.

You should not display photographs or information of a personal nature that could be deemed as inappropriate and bring the school community into disrepute.

Personal use of SOCIAL MEDIA:

Staff members must not identify themselves as employees of Teagues Bridge Primary School or Council providers in their personal webspace. This is to prevent information on these sites from being linked with the school and the council and to safeguard the privacy of staff members, particularly those involved in providing sensitive frontline services.

Staff members must not have contact through their personal social medium with any pupil, whether from Teagues Bridge or any other school, unless the pupils are family members.

Teagues Bridge Primary School does not expect staff members to discontinue contact with their family members via personal social media once the school starts providing services for them. However, any information staff members obtain in the course of their employment must not be used for personal gain nor be passed on to others who may use it in such away.

Staff members must not have any contact with pupils' family members through personal social media. This type of contact is likely to constitute a conflict of interest or call into questions their objectivity.

On leaving Teagues Bridge Primary School, staff members must not contact Teagues Bridge pupils by means of personal social media sites. Similarly, staff members must not contact pupils from their former schools by means of social media.

Information staff members have access to as part of their employment, including personal information about pupils and their family members, colleagues, Council staff and other parties and school or council corporate information must not be discussed on their personal webspace.

Photographs, videos or other types of image of pupils and their families or images depicting staff members wearing school or council uniforms or clothing with school logo's or images identifying sensitive school or council premises must not be published on personal webspace.

School or council email addresses and other official contact details must not used for setting up personal social media accounts or to communicate through such Media.

Staff members must not edit open access online encyclopaedia's such as Wikipedia in a personal capacity at work. This is because the source of the correction will be recorded as the employers IP address and the intervention will, therefore, appear as if it comes from the employer itself.

Caution is advised when inviting work colleagues to be 'friends' in personal social networking sites. Social networking sites blur the line between work and personal lives, and it may be difficult to maintain professional relationships, or it might be just too embarrassing if too much personal information is known in the work place.

Staff members are strongly advised to ensure that they set the privacy levels of their personal sites as strictly as they can and to opt out of public listings on social networking sites to protect their own privacy. Staff members should keep their passwords confidential, change them often and be careful about what is posted online; it is not safe to reveal home

addresses, telephone numbers and other personal information. It is a good idea to use a separate email address just for social networking so that any other contact details are not given away.

Staff members must always act in the best interests of children and young people when creating, participating in or contributing content to social media sites.

MONITORING OF INTERNET USE

Teagues Bridge Primary School monitors usage of its internet and email services without prior notification or authorisation from users.

Users of Teagues Bridge Primary School email and internet services should have no expectation of privacy in anything they create, store, send or receive using the school's ICT system.

BREACHES OF THE POLICY

Any breach of this policy may lead to disciplinary action being taken against the staff member/s involved in line with Teagues Bridge Primary School or Council Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.

A breach of this policy leading to breaches of confidentiality, or defamation or damage to the reputation of Teagues Bridge Primary School or the Council or any illegal acts or acts that render Teagues Bridge Primary School or the Council liable to third parties may result in disciplinary action or dismissal.

Contracted providers of Teagues Bridge Primary School or Council services must inform the relevant School or Council officer immediately of any breaches of this policy so that appropriate action can be taken to protect confidential information and limit the damage to the reputation of the school and the Council. Any action against breaches should be according to contractors' internal disciplinary procedures.

T&W Schools Social Networking Code of Conduct

Social Networking applications must not be used to publish any comments which may result in actions for defamation, discrimination, breaches of copyright, data protection or other claims for damages. This includes material of an illegal, sexual or offensive nature that may bring a school into disrepute.

Social Networking applications must not be used for the promotion of personal financial interest, commercial ventures or personal campaigns.

Social Networking applications must not be used in an abusive or hateful manner.

Social Networking applications must not be used for actions that would put school representatives in breach of school policies.

Social Networking applications must not breach the school's misconduct, equal opportunities or bullying and harassment policies.

Social Networking applications must not make reference to any pupil, parent, member of staff or school activity/event unless prior permission has been obtained and agreed with the headteacher.

School staff should be aware that if out-of-work activity reported on social networking applications causes potential embarrassment to the school or detrimentally affects the school, then the school is entitled to take disciplinary action.

Social Media Code of Conduct Timeline:

