

Stanford in the Vale CE Primary School

Social Media Policy



1 Rationale

- 1.1 Social media (such as Facebook and Twitter; messaging on MSN and on mobile phones; blogs; online discussion forums) bring opportunities for children, young people and adults to understand, engage and communicate with audiences in new and exciting ways. It is important that people are able to use these appropriately and safely.
- 1.2 No child at Stanford in the Vale CE Primary School can access Facebook at school. We sincerely hope that no child can access Facebook outside of school, as under 13s should not be registered users. The same should be true for children under 13 accessing MSN.

2 Aims

- 2.1 This policy aims to:
 - Balance support for innovation whilst providing a framework for best practise
 - Ensure the school is not exposed to legal risks
 - Ensure that the school's excellent reputation is not compromised
 - Ensure that users of social media are able to clearly distinguish where information provided via social media is legitimately representative of the school

3 Scope of this Policy

- 3.1 This policy is for all school stakeholders who may have access to social media – employees, governors and children who attend the school.

4 Principles

- 4.1 All potential users should bear in mind that information they share through any social networking applications, even if they are on private spaces, are still subject to copyright, data protection, Freedom of Information legislation, Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, so could be used in a court of law against them.
- 4.2 Social networking applications must not be used by employees for personal use, in work time, unless they have the express permission of the Headteacher.
- 4.3 Any proposal for using social networking applications as part of a school service/activity (whether they are hosted by the school or by a 3rd party) must be approved by the headteacher first.
- 4.4 School users must adhere to the following **Terms of Use**

Social networking applications:

1. Must not be used to publish any content which may result in actions for defamation, discrimination, breaches of copyright, data protection or other claim for damages; this includes, but is not limited to, material of an illegal, sexual or offensive nature that may bring the school into disrepute.
2. Must not be used for the promotion of financial interests, commercial ventures or personal campaigns
3. Must not be used in an abusive or hateful manner
4. Must not be used for actions that would put the employees, Governors or children in breach of school codes of conduct or policies relating to staff
5. Must not breach the school's Positive Behaviour, Equality Policy or Anti-Bullying Policy
6. Must not be used to discuss/advise any matters relating to school issues, staff, children or parents
7. No employee should have a 'friend' to share information with, who is a minor
8. Employees should not identify themselves as a representative of the school
9. References should not be made to any staff member, child, parent, school activity or event unless prior permission has been obtained from the Headteacher
10. Staff should be aware that if their out-of-work activity causes potential embarrassment for the employer or detrimentally effects the employer's reputation, then the employer is entitled to take disciplinary action
11. No child should attempt to access a staff member's area on the network

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12. Staff are not permitted to use their personal mobile phone around children during the school day whilst on school premises. Personal mobile phones or the school mobile phones can be taken on school visits / activities outside of the school building for safety reasons.
13. As a rule children should not bring mobile phones to school but on the rare occasion that it does they should hand their mobile phone to their class teacher at the beginning of the school day.
14. Staff are not permitted to use their personal cameras, mobile phones or recording equipment to take images of children on the school premises or undertaking an activity outside of the school.
15. Downloading or storage of images must be on the school network or school laptops, not on personal devices.

5 Monitoring of the Policy

- 5.1 Any violation of this policy will be considered as potentially gross misconduct under the school's Disciplinary Policy (staff); under the Code of Conduct (governors) and under the school's Positive Behaviour or Anti-Bullying Policies (children).
- 5.2 All staff, children and Governors are encouraged to report any suspicions of misuse to the Headteacher or trusted adult. If the Headteacher receives a disclosure that an adult employed by the school is using social networking in an inappropriate way as detailed above, this should be recorded in line with the Child Protection/Safeguarding Policy and/or Disciplinary Policy.
- 5.3 Children are strongly encouraged to report to a trusted adult any worries they have about cyberbullying or improper contact. The school has a duty of care to investigate and work with children and families where there are reports of cyberbullying/misuse of social media during out of school hours.

6 The Law

- 6.1 Whilst there is no one specific offence of cyberbullying, certain activities can be criminal offences under a range of different laws, including:
 - The Protection from Harassment Act 1997
 - The Malicious Communications Act 1998
 - S.127 of the Communication Act 2003
 - Public Order Act 1986
 - The Defamation Acts of 1952 and 1996
- 6.2 A school cannot be 'defamed'; only individuals or groups of individuals can bring action for defamation. Staff who are concerned that comments posted about them are defamatory in nature, should seek advice from their union or undertake their own legal advice.
- 6.3 The Headteacher will seek legal advice from Oxfordshire County Council on any matters related to the potential misuse of social media.

7 Links to other School Policies

Complaints Procedure

Anti-Bullying Policy

Child Protection / Safeguarding Policy

Staff Disciplinary

8 Policy Review

- 8.1 This policy will be reviewed annually.
Next Review Date: September 2019

Date: September 2018