



Social Media Policy & Guidelines for Staff

Policy updated: September 2023

To be reviewed by: September 2024

Version Control

Date	Change
May 2017	Policy written in light of school social media platforms and to incorporate latest guidance.
May 2021	Policy updated in line with current guidance and Vision statement added.
Sept. 2023	Policy reviewed, no changes necessary.

**At All Saints' we are 'Children of God'.
We wear our crowns with pride.
Together, we are Included, Involved and Inspired.**

- 24 Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize?
Run in such a way as to get the prize.
- 25 Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last; but we do it to get a crown that will last forever.
- 26 So I run with purpose in every step.

1 Corinthians 9: 24-26

Vision Statement

*At All Saints' everyone is welcomed and **included**. Each individual is acknowledged and valued as an equal member of our school family and we form a community where we worship God together freely. We celebrate our inclusivity and are respectful of our differences.*

*Our emblem is a crown; we wear it with pride because it reminds us that we are working for a purpose. This means that we are **involved** in our learning and are determined to take whatever action is needed for us to be the best that we can be.*

*We seek a clearer understanding of the world and confidently imagine a better future. With our eyes fixed on this prize, we are **inspired** to be life-long learners and we want to inspire others too to make a difference in this world.*

Together · Included · Involved · Inspired

INTENT

The widespread availability and use of social media applications such as Facebook, Instagram and Twitter, bring 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. To capture the benefits offered by social media, the school may explore and implement its use for school improvement and educational purposes.

With responsible use, this technology can assist with the development of key social skills whilst also providing users with access to a range of easily accessible, free facilities. However, as with any technology that opens a gateway to online communication with young people, there are a number of risks associated which must be addressed.

Working in a school requires us to maintain professional boundaries in all forms of communication, whether or not it involves electronic/digital technology. This policy and the principles below are to help staff and individuals avoid the downside risks of using social media. These principles apply to any approved use of social media communication with the school or to personal use of social media outside of school.

IMPLEMENTATION

Staff

This document applies to all staff, including agency/supply staff, volunteers, governors or anyone working within the school and using the school's systems and equipment whether on or off the premises. The policy may also apply to former employees in certain circumstances. The use of the word 'individuals' in this document includes this range of people.

The policy and principles should be read in conjunction with the School's policies on Online Safety and Mobile Phones.

Social Media

In this document, social media means electronic communication software, applications (including those running on mobile devices including texting, SMS, and videos), e-mail and web sites, which enable users to interact, create and exchange information online. Examples include, but are not limited to, sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, as well as online discussion forums, blogs, other and the use of webcams. *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 copyright, 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 Equalities, Child Protection and IT Acceptable Use Policy.

Key Principles when Using Social Media Sites

There are many legitimate uses of social media within the curriculum to support and celebrate student learning. For example, the school has official Twitter, Instagram and Facebook accounts which are regularly updated to update parents with the curriculum in school. We also use Tapestry for Reception and Year 1 and Class Dojo for Years 2, 3, 4, 5 & 6. There are also many possibilities for using social media to enhance and develop students' learning. However, published items can be capable of more than one interpretation and once published the damage may not be recoverable.

The Golden Principles

Social networking outside of work hours, on non school-issue equipment, is the personal choice of all school staff. Owing to the public nature of such websites, it is advisable for staff to consider the possible implications of participation. The following advice should be considered if involved in social networking:

An individual must ensure they do not:

- Disclose confidential information without express authority - especially about students, staff, voluntary or other workers at the school, nor breach their right to privacy
- Engage in posts or activities which are detrimental to maintaining effective working relationships between individuals 'working' at the school
- Bring the reputation of the school into disrepute
- Engage in activities which compromise, or might be seen to compromise, the professional standards of teaching or the professional standards applicable to support staff
- Post comments which incite others to make discriminatory or other professionally unacceptable comments

An individual must be careful to ensure that:

- Personal details are never shared with pupils such as private email address, telephone number or home address. It is recommended that staff ensure that all possible privacy settings are activated to prevent students from making contact on personal profiles. The simplest and most effective way to do this is to remove details from search results and turn off public visibility.
- Staff should not engage in personal online contact with students outside of Headteacher authorised systems (e.g. school email account/Class Dojo/Tapestry for homework purposes).
- Staff should ensure that full privacy settings are in place to prevent students from accessing photo albums or personal information.
- Staff are advised against accepting invites from colleagues until they have checked with them in person that the invite is genuine (avoiding fake profiles set up by students).
- Staff should check their privacy settings on **all** social media platforms regularly (3 months) to ensure their online profiles are not accessible to the public domain.
- Decline student initiated 'friend' requests and not issue 'friend' requests to students.
- You keep the location setting private when on schools trips. This will ensure the safety of pupils and adults in care at the time.

The following activities must not be taken:

- Bullying and harassment against fellow colleagues via social media. Any allegations will be dealt with under the schools' normal bullying and harassment/disciplinary policies.
- Posting libellous statements that may cause damage to the school
- Bring the school's reputation into disrepute.
- Compromise the security of the school's systems
- Breach confidentiality about any of the staff, students, governors, volunteers.
- Breaches of copyright – passing on images/text

Children and Young People

Although children are not legally allowed to access/obtain a social media account until the age of 13 (COPPA LAW), we cannot stop them. It is our job therefore, to teach and instruct the children to use them sensibly and ensure they are aware of the risks and dangers they may pose. Adults are responsible to safeguard that:

- The school will control access to social networking sites through existing filtering systems.

- Students are taught the safe use of social media as part of the curriculum, this includes being advised against giving out personal details or information, which could identify them or their location (e.g. mobile phone number, home address, school name, groups or clubs attended, IM and email address or full names of friends).
- Students are discouraged from posting personal photos on social networking sites without considering how publicly accessible the information is and the potential for misuse. Advice is also given regarding background images in photos, which could reveal personal details (e.g. house number, street name, school uniform).
- Pupils are advised on social networking security and recommendations made for privacy settings to be activated to 'Friends only' for all applications to restrict unsolicited access. The importance of passwords and blocking of unwanted communications is also highlighted.
- The school should be aware that social networking can be a vehicle for cyber bullying. Pupils are encouraged to report any incidents of bullying to the school allowing for the procedures, as set out in the Anti-Bullying policy, to be followed.
- We encourage children to take screenshots of cyberbullying or inappropriate comments

IMPACT

Final Reminders

As noted at the outset, social media is a useful means of communication. Because of its ease of access and familiarity, it can lead us to unwittingly overstep the boundaries of professional standards and conduct towards students or work colleagues. When using social media, individuals should remember that the school is a public body and that we are subject to various expectations.

Please remember when using such media to:

- Ensure that no information is made available that could provide a person with unauthorised access to the school, its systems and/or any confidential information.
- Not post any confidential information regarding the school on any social networking website.

We ask all individuals to consider the following, before posting information or images on social networking sites:

- Think carefully before posting information – would you want the person concerned or your employer or potential employer to see it?
- Review your posted information regularly – what may have seemed like a good idea at the time may not seem such a good idea some months or years later.

As a result of following the guidance in this policy we will enable both pupils and staff to feel confident in their safe use of social media by minimising risks, but also knowing the procedures to follow should they have any concerns (see Online Safety policy).

Further information/links:

- Childnet – [teachers and professional section](#)
- UK Safer Internet Centre – [Teachers and school staff section](#)
- [Social Media Guides](#)
- Childnet – [Teachers and Technology Checklist](#)
- Professional Online Safety Helpline (POSH) – 0344 381 4772 or email: helplin@saferinternet.org.uk
- Childnet – [How to make a report](#)
- UKCCIS – [Sexting Guidance for Schools and Colleges](#)
- Online Safety [Policy](#)