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Lanesend Primary School

Social Media Policy 2020

Signed: Date:
(Headteacher)

Signed: Date:
(Chair of Trustees)

Review Date: September 2022 (Every 2 Years)
Reviewed By: Headteacher and Child-Centred Group

Lanesend Primary Social Media Policy

Introduction

The internet provides a range of social media tools that allow users to interact with one another. While recognising the benefits of this medium for new opportunities of communication, this policy sets out the principles that children, staff, families and the wider school community are expected to follow when using social media. It is crucial that all stakeholders in Lanesend Primary School, including children, families, staff and the public at large have confidence in the school. The principles set out in this policy are designed to ensure that the use of social media is responsibly undertaken and that confidentiality of children and staff and the reputation of the school are safeguarded. All members of the school community must be conscious at all times of the need to keep their personal and professional lives separate.

Scope

This policy applies to Lanesend Primary School children, staff, families and the wider school community. Under no circumstances may Lanesend Primary School logos, crests, typefaces or brands be used or published on any personal web space or on any online or offline medium without prior consent. These are registered trademarks, patents and the intellectual property of Lanesend Primary School.

This policy covers personal use of social media as well as the use of social media for official school purposes, including sites hosted and maintained on behalf of the school. This policy applies to personal web space such as social networking sites (for example *Facebook*, *Instagram*, *SnapChat*), blogs, microblogs such as *Twitter*, chatrooms, forums, podcasts, open access online encyclopaedias such as *Wikipedia*, social bookmarking sites such as *del.icio.us* and content sharing sites such as *flickr* and *YouTube*.

The internet is a fast moving technology and it is impossible to cover all circumstances or emerging media – the principles set out in this policy must be followed irrespective of the medium.

Principles for Staff

- Staff should be conscious at all times of the need to keep their personal and professional/school lives separate. They should not put themselves in a position where there is a conflict between the school and their personal interests;
- Staff should not identify themselves as members of Lanesend Primary School in their personal web-space, unless specifically linked to an approved job role within the school community where it serves a purpose to professionally market the school;
- Staff should not engage in activities involving social media which might bring Lanesend Primary School into disrepute;

- Staff should not represent their personal views as those of Lanesend Primary School on any social medium;
- Staff should not 'friend' children or families on social media unless they are relatives or close personal friends. Any children who are relatives or close personal friends i.e 'godchildren' must be of the legal age to have the social media account;
- Staff should not discuss personal information about other children, Lanesend Primary School and the wider community they interact with on any social media;
- Staff should not use school email addresses to set up personal social media accounts or to communicate through such media.
- Staff should not publish photographs, videos or any other types of image of Lanesend Primary School children on their personal social media unless it is of their own child, relatives or close personal friends;
- Staff should not use social media and the internet in any way to attack, insult, abuse or defame children, their family members, colleagues, other professionals, other organisations or Lanesend Primary School.
- Staff must set their privacy at the highest level and regularly check to ensure this remains the case.
- If staff run a separate business page via social media, this must be separate from the school and only official school posts can be shared.

Lanesend Primary School has its own official social media accounts and we welcome staff and families sharing any official posts through their own personal accounts to generate positive media for the school.

This policy is designed to protect staff and the school. If staff fail to follow this policy and the integrity of the school is put at risk, the school's disciplinary procedures will be put in place, which may lead to dismissal.

Prior to employment, Lanesend Primary School will carry out a web and social media check to ensure that staff accounts comply with our social media policy and that they meet the professional standards of the school.

Personal use of Social Media

Children and members of the wider school community should not identify themselves as members of Lanesend Primary School in their personal web-space, unless specifically linked to an approved job role within the school community where it serves a purpose to professionally market the school. This is to prevent information being linked with the school and to safeguard the privacy of staff members, children and families and the wider school community.

Children should not have contact through any personal social medium with any member of staff, whether from Lanesend Primary School or any other school unless the staff concerned are family members or close personal friends.

If children and members of the wider school community wish to communicate with staff they should only do so through official school sites created for this purpose.

Information that children and members of the wider community have access to as part of their involvement with Lanesend Primary School, including personal information, should not be discussed on their personal web space.

Photographs, videos or any other types of image of Lanesend Primary School children and their families taken within school hours should not be published on personal or public web space without prior written permission from the school.

All staff, families, children and members of the wider community 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. All staff, families, children and members of the wider community should keep their passwords confidential, change them often and be careful about what is posted online.

Children, staff and families should not post images or videos from school events on any public social media site. Images or videos taken at school events, when such permission has been granted by the school, are for the sole and private use of that individual and their use must be in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018.

Inappropriate use of Social Networking Sites:

See our Anti-Violence and Aggression Policy for more details.

Although social networking sites may appear to be the quickest and easiest ways to express frustrations or concerns, it is not appropriate to do so. Other channels, such as private and confidential discussion with staff are most appropriate.

The school considers the following examples to be inappropriate uses of social networking sites.

- Making allegations about children at the School/cyber bullying;
- Making complaints about the School/staff at the School;
- Posting negative/offensive comments about specific children/staff at the School;
- Posting racist comments;
- Posting comments which threaten violence.

Social media websites are being used increasingly to fuel campaigns and complaints against schools, Headteachers, school staff, and in some cases, other families or children. Lanesend Primary School considers the use of social media websites in this way as unacceptable and not in the best interests of the children or the whole school community.

Any concerns you may have must be made through the appropriate channels and using or organogram to contact the appropriate member of staff, so they can be dealt with fairly, appropriately and effectively for all concerned.

In the event that any child or family member of a child/ren is found to be posting libellous or defamatory comments on Facebook or other social network sites, they

will be reported to the appropriate 'report abuse' section of the network site. All social network sites have clear rules about the content which can be posted on the site and they provide robust mechanisms to report contact or activity which breaches this. The school will also expect that any family member or child removes such comments immediately.

In serious cases, the school will also consider its legal options to deal with any such misuse of social networking and other sites. Additionally, and perhaps more importantly is the issue of cyber bullying and the use by one child or a family member to publicly humiliate another by inappropriate social network entry. We will take and deal with this as a serious incident of school bullying.

Unacceptable behaviour may result in the Police being informed.

The school reserves the right to take any necessary actions to ensure that members of the school community are not subjected to abuse.

Breaches of this Policy

Any breach of this policy that leads to a breach of confidentiality, defamation or damage to the reputation of Lanesend Primary School or any illegal acts or acts that render Lanesend Primary School liable to third parties may result in legal action, disciplinary action or sanctions in line with the published school policies for staff and children.

Where families or children are found to have breached this policy the Headteacher will meet with families to remind them of the policy. Following this meeting a decision is made as to what further course of action might be taken which may include legal action where there has been damage to the school, individuals or the school's reputation.