LONGLEAZE PRIMARY SCHOOL   June 2017

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Introduction

This policy is one of a set of policies governing the conduct of employees of Longleaze Primary School. This policy should be read alongside the Online Safety policy as these policies complement each other.

What is it?
Social media is a type of interactive online communication that allows parties to communicate instantly with each other or to share information in a public forum. There are various online technology tools that enable people to engage in social media. Longleaze Primary School now has its own social networking page on Facebook, which will be used to enable parents and carers to ask questions or to signpost parents to other information.

See examples at the end of this policy of social media sites.

This policy provides guidance to school employees who use social media sites in their personal time (either at home or during an authorised break at work), with the aim of protecting both staff and the school from disrepute.

Who does it apply to?
The governing body of Longleaze Primary School has agreed to adopt this policy. The policy will be applied to all permanent, temporary and casual employees employed at the school as well as volunteers and students during their time with us.

When does it apply?
This policy applies at all times when school employees are making use of social media sites in a personal capacity.

It applies whether the employee is at home or at work and whether they are using school equipment or their own device.

When does it not apply?
This policy does not cover the use of social media sites by employees within their role on behalf of the school. Where employees use social media sites as part of their work, the school will make them aware of the school's expectations and standards in the use of social media via that separate policy.

Social media etiquette

Social media allows people great freedom in how they communicate and express themselves. To help ensure everyone is able to equally benefit from social media sites, employees at Longleaze Primary School must abide by the following principles.

- Tell the truth;
- Write deliberately and with accuracy;
- Acknowledge and correct mistakes promptly;
- Preserve the original post, using notations to show where changes have been made, so as to maintain the integrity of any material published
- Never delete someone else's post, although a poster could delete their own post.
- Give due consideration when posting comments, having adhered to the advice within this policy;
- Strive for high quality with every post – including basic spell-checking;
- Stay on topic;
- Disagree with other opinions respectfully;
- Link to online references and original source materials directly;
- Disclose conflicts of interest;
- When posting on school related matters, only post items promoting or celebrating school events. Never post images of individual children or work completed by individual children without the permission of their parents / carers first.
- Only posts that are in the best interests of the school will be acceptable.
- Ensure that images posted online are appropriate for the whole school community to see.

Main Points

1.1 Many employees make use of social media in a personal capacity and this policy is not intended to limit their use or enjoyment of social media.

1.2 However employees should remember that, even when not acting on the school's behalf, they can be held accountable for content which they post on social media sites which could be potentially damaging to the school.

1.3 Damaging content includes any communication made in a personal capacity through social media which:

Brings the school into disrepute	E.g. criticising the school, children or colleagues/governors in an inappropriate manner, posting images that are inappropriate or links to inappropriate content.
Breaches confidentiality	E.g. revealing information owned by the school; giving away confidential information about an individual (such as a colleague or child) or discussing the school's internal workings (such as school budget spending that has not been communicated to the public)
Is discriminatory against, or bullying or harassment of, any group or individual	E.g. making offensive or derogatory comments relating to sex, gender reassignment, race (including ethnicity), disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief or age; using social media to bully another individual; or posting images that are discriminatory, offensive, or support radicalisation or links to such content.
Breaches copyright	E.g. by using someone else's images or written content without permission.

Employees must consider who can read what is posted, they must be aware that some sites are open to all and other sites allow the employee to control who can see what has been posted.

Employees need to ensure that they have reviewed privacy settings so that only those who they wish to read the content are able to do so.

Employees should not include their workplace and/or job title on their profile – being aware that this may make it easier for children, parents and members of the public to contact them in their personal time.

Accessing social media in school time
Employees may make occasional and reasonable personal use of the internet (during lunch and break times), as long as this is in private non-teaching areas and does not interfere with the performance of their duties or the work of other colleagues.

Employees' access of social media for personal use on their own equipment (e.g. mobile phone, smartphone etc.) is only acceptable during official breaks and away from teaching areas.

How the school protects itself

The school will not routinely monitor the webpages that an employee can access from their school laptop, however full logs are retained and can be accessed as part of a genuine investigation.

The school does not monitor employees' personal social media pages without reason. However, as with any allegation of misconduct, the school will investigate where breaches of this policy are brought to its attention by any means (e.g. via members of the public, employees, parents or children).

Investigations which involve social media content

Any investigation which involves social media content will take into consideration:

- the intent of the content;
- the "moral intensity" of the content – what damage has been done;
- the implications – including the level of risk it places the school at (including reputation, data etc.) and management time;
- the impact – on work colleagues, the public status of the school, morale etc.;
- the individual's right to freedom of expression (provided it is not discriminatory, damaging, malicious or libellous).

Inappropriate content posted on social media sites either during, or outside of work time, may lead to either informal or formal disciplinary action. See examples at the end of this policy of social media sites.
Serious breaches of this policy, for example incidents of bullying of colleagues, discriminatory behaviour or social media activity causing serious damage to the school, may constitute gross misconduct and lead to summary dismissal.

Social media content which proves that employees have breached other school policies may be used in disciplinary investigations relating to these matters.

Roles and responsibilities

Employee responsibilities

To carefully consider, before posting content on social media sites, whether this will bring the school into disrepute, breach confidentiality or copyright or be considered offensive, defamatory, discriminatory, bullying or is potential harassment.

If you are unsure of whether it is appropriate to post certain content on a social media site advice can be sought from the Senior Leadership Team. Be mindful of how your digital footprint can be extended through the tagging of images on the devices of friends and family.

Student and volunteer responsibilities

To carefully consider, before posting content on social media sites, whether it is appropriate to post certain content or if to do so would bring the school into disrepute, breach confidentiality or copyright or be considered offensive, defamatory, discriminatory, bullying or is potential harassment.

If you are unsure about what is appropriate to post, advice can be sought from the Senior Leadership Team.

Senior Management responsibilities

The Senior Leadership Team is not expected to monitor personal use of social media by staff. However if a matter, relating to inappropriate use of social media, is brought to their attention they are responsible for looking into the matter in line with the relevant school policy, taking into consideration the factors outlined above. This may involve the designated Safeguarding Lead, Head Teacher or in more severe cases, the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub, the Police or CEOP.

Equal Opportunities
This policy has been Equality Impact Assessed to identify opportunities to promote equality and mitigate any negative or adverse impacts on particular groups.

Legislation and guidance

- Human Rights Act 1998
- Data Protection Act 1988
- Equalities Act 2011
- ACAS Factsheets "Social Networking"
- Guidance for safer working practice for adults who work with children and young people in education settings

This policy has been reviewed by Wiltshire Council's legal department to ensure compliance with the above legislation and our school's statutory duties.

Further information

There are a number of related policies and procedures that employees should be aware of including:

- Code of Conduct
- Dignity at work
- Disciplinary policy and procedure
- Grievance policy and procedure
- Whistleblowing policy
- Online Safety policy
- Volunteers policy
- Safeguarding policy

In addition, employees' job descriptions may contain requirements relating to their conduct. There are also professional code of conducts e.g. teachers' standards, that relate to the work an employee does and how it is done. Advice may also be sought from the 'Staff Code of Conduct for Safer Working Practice'.

Examples of social media sites

Social networking sites (e.g. Facebook)	Users create personal profiles, add other users as friends and exchange messages, including automatic notifications when they update their own profile. Additionally, users may join common-interest user groups, organised by common characteristics.
Blogging and micro-blogging sites (e.g. Twitter)	A blog is a type of website or part of a website usually maintained by an individual with regular entries of commentary and descriptions of events (blogging). A micro-blog is simply smaller in size.
Professional networking sites (e.g. LinkedIn)	Business-related social networking sites mainly used for professional networking. Users maintain a list of contact details of people with whom they have some level of relationship, called connections. This list of connections can then be used to build up a contact network, follow different companies and find jobs, people and business opportunities.
Online communities (e.g. MySpace)	An online community of users' personal profiles. These typically include photographs, information about personal interests and blogs. Users send one another messages and socialise within the community.
Video sharing websites (e.g. YouTube)	A website on which users can upload, share, and view videos. A wide variety of user-generated video content is displayed, including film and TV clips as well as amateur content such as video blogging. Most videos enable users to leave and exchange comments.
Collaborative web projects (e.g. Wikipedia)	Web-based projects where articles are written collaboratively by volunteers around the world, and almost all articles are freely editable by any visitor.

Photo-sharing (Flikr)	A website which provides the means for a user to upload their digital images (usually photos from a digital camera, but technically any file saved in a common image format such as JPEG, GIF or PNG) to a third party online server, where they are stored and hosted for public or private access and display.
Online gaming sites (e.g. Club Penguin)	Online gaming is a technology, where games are played over a computer network, typically via the Internet. Many games have online associated communities.
Chatroom sites	An online place where a group of people can get together and chat about a particular subject or just chat. Usually you will require a sign-in. Some chat rooms allow you to talk to one individual without the others seeing your conversation.