



**CHARLESWORTH SCHOOL**

*...from tiny acorns great oaks grow*

# Social Media Policy



## **AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

The widespread availability and use of social networking applications 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 community and partners, our legal responsibilities and our reputation. For example, our use of social networking applications has implications for our duty to safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults.

The policy requirements in this document aim to provide this balance to support innovation and Schools of the 21st Century, whilst providing a framework of good practice. They apply to all adults either employed by the school or defined by school representatives e.g. governors and volunteers.

## **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that:-

- All children are safeguarded
- Charlesworth Primary School, its leaders and governors are not exposed to legal risks;
- The reputation of Charlesworth Primary School, it's staff and governors are not adversely affected.
- Any users are able to clearly distinguish where information provided via social networking applications is legitimately representative of Charlesworth Primary School.

## **PROCEDURES**

### **Scope**

This policy covers the use of social networking applications by school employees, governors and by partners or other third parties (eg. Friends of Charlesworth School) on behalf of the School. These groups are referred to collectively as 'school representatives' for the purpose of this policy.

The requirements of this policy apply to all uses of social networking applications which are used for or by the school and those used personally but

may refer to school activities or representatives, regardless of whether the applications are hosted corporately or not. They must also be considered where school representatives are contributing in an official capacity to social networking applications provided by external organisations.

### **Definitions**

Social networking applications include, but are not limited to:

- Blogs
- Online discussion forums
- Collaborative spaces
- Media sharing services
- 'Microblogging' applications

Examples include Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and You Tube.

Many of the principles of this policy also apply to other types of online presence such as virtual worlds. All school representatives 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 Equality and Safeguarding Policies.

### **Inappropriate Use of Social Networking Sites**

School staff **should not** invite, accept or engage in communications with parents or children from the school community to any personal social networking sites while in employment at Charlesworth Primary School.

Any communication received from children to school representatives must be **immediately reported** to the Head Teacher or other Designated Lead Person for Safeguarding. Procedures for safeguarding will then be followed.

If a school representative is made aware of any other inappropriate communications involving any child and social networking. These must be **reported immediately** as above. School policy for Acceptable Use of The Internet must be used at all times when children use ICT and access the internet in school.

If a school representative is made aware of a discussion through social media where they or other school representatives are being badly represented it should be reported immediately as above.

### **Enforcement of the Policy**

Any breach of the terms set out below could result in the application or offending content being removed in accordance with the published complaints procedure and the publishing rights of the responsible school representative being suspended. The Local Authority reserves the right to require the closure of any applications or removal of content published by school representatives which may adversely affect the reputation of the school or put it at risk of legal action.

Any communications or content published that causes damage to the school, Local Authority, any of its employees or any third party's reputation may amount to misconduct or gross misconduct to which the school and Local Authority Dismissal and Disciplinary Policies apply.

Where applications allow the posting of messages online, users must be mindful that the right to freedom of expression attaches only to lawful conduct. Charlesworth Primary School expects that users of social networking applications will always exercise the right of freedom of expression with due consideration for the rights of others and strictly in accordance with these Terms of Use.

### **Friends of Charlesworth Facebook Page**

This is considered a useful parent communication tool that is both open and managed by responsible persons. There should be two responsible representatives so that at all times school can contact them to ensure inappropriate material is quickly removed.

### **Related Documentation**

- Complaints Procedure
- Safeguarding Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Equality Policy
- Internet Policy in School Policy

## **MONITORING AND REVIEW**

The Headteacher and Governing Body will review the implementation of the Mathematics Policy in line with the agreed schedule for policy review.

Staff and governors will be involved and asked to contribute to the review and all staff will be informed of the outcome of the review.



