



Amendments made since last review Summer 2019 – no amendments made Summer 2022 – no amendments made	
Policy agreed / reviewed 12/07/2022	Next review due Summer term 2025
Signed on behalf of the Governing Body	Signed by headteacher

## Social Media and Networking Policy

### Rationale:

The internet attracts an audience of millions and has changed the lives of many children, both in school, and at home. The internet is used for a variety of reasons – researching, communicating and networking.

On-line (internet based) social networking facilities can be powerful tools for positive use, but can also be dangerous to users.

### Purpose of this policy:

These guidelines are intended to protect pupils, staff members and governors.

There are five key areas

- A. The use of social networking sites by pupils within school.
- B. Use of social networking by staff in a personal capacity.
- C. Creation of network accounts by staff for use in education.
- D. Comments posted by parents/carers.
- E. Dealing with incidents of online bullying.

### Broad guidelines:

These guidelines are addressed to governors and members of staff using internet-based social-networking facilities:

#### A. The use of social networking sites by pupils within school.

If social media sites are used by pupils as part of the computing curriculum then staff should carry out a risk assessment to determine which tools are appropriate.

#### B. Use of social networking by staff in a personal capacity.

It is possible that a high proportion of staff will have their own social networking site accounts. It is important for them **to protect their professional reputation** by ensuring that they use their personal accounts in an appropriate manner. Inappropriate use by staff will be referred to the Headteacher in the first instance or LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer).

Guidelines are issued to staff:

1. Staff must never add pupils or ex-pupils as friends into their personal accounts.
2. Staff should not comment on school life in any way, nor should they use on line the names of individuals connected with the school.
3. Staff must not post pictures of school events without the Headteacher's consent.
4. Staff must not use social networking sites within lesson times.
5. Staff need to use social networking in a way that does not conflict with the current National Teacher's Standards.
6. Staff should review and adjust their privacy settings to give them the appropriate level of privacy and confidentiality – 'closed' not 'open'.
7. Staff must not post negative comments about the school, pupils, parents or colleagues including Governors and St Helens Council.

8. Staff should read and comply with 'Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who Work with Children and Young People'.
9. Users should not breach the terms and conditions of use imposed by the Service Providers.
10. Any breach of this policy will be dealt with through the school, following the advice of and recommendations from the Local Authority. Governors or members of staff who feel that they cannot comply with the guidelines set down in this policy must be prepared to justify their actions to the Governing Body.

### **C. Creation of network accounts by staff for use in education.**

All social media services must be approved by the Headteacher in advance of any educational work being undertaken.

### **D. Comments posted by parents/carers.**

Parents and carers will be made aware of their responsibilities regarding their use of social networking. Methods of school communication include the prospectus, the website, newsletters, letters and verbal discussion.

1. Parents are expected to not post pictures of pupils other than their own children on social networking sites.
2. Parents should make complaints through official school channels rather than posting them on social networking sites.
3. Parents should not post malicious or fictitious comments on social networking sites about any member of the school community.

Any comments on social media sites that could be interpreted as bringing the school into disrepute maybe be handed to the Local Authority Legal Team who will decide on an appropriate course of action.

### **E. Dealing with incidents of online bullying**

The schools e-safety policy makes sanctions regarding bullying using new technologies very clear. School can take action against incidents that happen outside school if it:

1. Could have repercussions for the orderly running of the school or
2. Poses a threat to another pupil or member of the public or
3. Could adversely affect the reputation of the school.

Use of social networking sites to harass, bully or intimidate would be covered by this irrespective of when/where the post was made.



### **Parents, Carers and Visitors Code of Conduct: Use of Social Media**

Over recent years social media tools have become an integral feature of modern life, providing opportunities for organisations (both public and private sector) and citizens to engage and communicate. A key feature of many social media tools is their unparalleled ability to broadcast and receive information quickly and link to a whole network of people in a matter of seconds. It is also the case that material broadcast via Facebook and Twitter can persist in the digital world almost indefinitely often reaching a wider audience than the author had originally intended.

As a public body and regulated setting, responsible for the care and education of children, Longton Lane Primary school is committed to the responsible and appropriate use of social media. Our own use of social media is governed by the school Social Media and Networking Policy

Social media tools include, but are not limited to:

- Blogs\Microblogging
- Social Networking
- Collaboration Networking Media
- Social Bookmarking
- Photo and Video sharing

This guidance forms part of Longton Lane Primary school's code of conduct for parents, carers and visitors and seeks to extend those principles to the digital world. It is not intended to stifle legitimate debate, discussion or interfere with private use of social media tools. It aims to:

- Clarify expectations about the use of social media tools by parents, carers or visitors as it relates to Longton Lane Primary school.
- Outline the steps Longton Lane Primary school will take if it considers social media content to be offensive, inappropriate, inaccurate or otherwise unacceptable.
- Protect the reputation of Longton Lane Primary school and ensure that social media use supports our educational, spiritual and pastoral ethos.
- Support the use of existing school policies and procedures to resolve issues of concern.
- As part of our code of conduct for parents, carers and visitors Longton Lane Primary school expects the following standards to apply in the use of social media tools:
- Foul, abusive, discriminatory or threatening material about the school, its staff or pupils will not be tolerated. Parents\carers posting such material will be contacted by the school for its immediate removal. Whenever necessary the school shall seek legal advice on any further action that might be necessary.
- If parents\carers become aware of offensive/abusive or factually inaccurate postings about Longton Lane Primary school it is requested that these are brought to the attention of the head teacher or a member of school staff at the earliest opportunity.
- Longton Lane Primary school has policies and procedures for a wide range of issues including bullying, attendance, additional needs and complaints. As such, social media tools are not an appropriate vehicle to progress such matters. Schools will not engage with parents\carers via this route but will direct parents\carers to the appropriate procedure.
- When factually incorrect information is posted about Longton Lane Primary school via social media, the author(s) will be contacted by the school for its removal\correction.
- Longton Lane Primary school has a safeguarding duty to all of its pupils and will take appropriate action if it considers social media contents to compromise this. This can include the identification of child through social media discussion and the use of visual material within content.

