

# LEADENHAM CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

## SCHOOL SOCIAL NETWORKING POLICY

The widespread availability and use of social networking applications bring opportunities to understand engage and communicate with audiences in new and exciting ways. It is important that we are able to use these technologies and services effectively and appropriately. However, it is important to ensure that we balance this with our duties to our school community and partners, our legal responsibilities and our reputation.

The use of social networking applications has implications for our duty to **safeguard young 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.

### Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure:

- That Leadenham CE Primary School, its leaders, staff and governors are not exposed to legal risks;
- That the reputation of Leadenham CE Primary School, staff, students and governors at the school are not adversely affected;
- All children are safeguarded
- That any users are able to clearly distinguish where information provided via social networking applications is legitimately representative of Leadenham CE Primary School

### Scope

The policy covers the use of social networking applications by school employees, governors and by partners or other third parties on behalf of the school. These groups are referred to 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 any school related purpose. They must also be considered where school representatives are contributing in an official or professional capacity to any social networking applications. Social networking applications include, but are not limited to: blogs, online discussion forums, collaborative spaces, media sharing services, 'Microblogging' applications. Examples include Twitter, Facebook, MSN and You Tube. Many of the principles of this policy also apply to other types of online applications 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 and the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006. They must also operate in line with the school and local authority Equality and Safeguarding Policies.

### Guidelines for staff, governors and school representatives Personal Responsibility

- All Leadenham CE Primary School employees are personally responsible for the content they publish online.
- Online behaviour should reflect the same standards of honesty, respect, and consideration that is used face-to-face.
- When posting to a blog the information is representative of the individual's views and opinions and not the views and opinions of [Leadenham CE Primary School](#)
- School representatives should remember that blogs, wikis and podcasts are an extension of the classroom. What is inappropriate in the classroom should be deemed inappropriate online.
- When contributing online school representatives should not post confidential student information.
- No last names, school names, addresses or phone numbers should appear on blogs or wikis or any social networking site.
- By posting comments or by having online conversations etc. on social media sites school representatives must be aware they are broadcasting to the world, and that even with the strictest privacy settings what is posted online should be within the bounds of professional discretion.
- School staff will not invite, accept or engage in communications with children from the current school community to any personal social networking sites while in employment at Leadenham CE Primary School.
- Any communication received from children to school representatives must be immediately reported to the Headteacher or Senior Teacher who are Designated Child Protection Officers and procedures for safeguarding 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.
- Staff are encouraged to set their privacy settings on social networking sites to the highest level.
- The use of social networking applications in work time for personal use is not allowed.
- Any school representative found to be posting remarks or comments that breach confidentiality and/or are deemed to be of a detrimental nature to the school or individuals in the school community may face disciplinary action in line with the school's disciplinary procedures.

## **Disclaimers**

- School representatives must include disclaimers within their personal blogs that the views are their own and do not reflect on their

employer.

- Classroom blogs do not require a disclaimer, but teachers are encouraged to moderate content contributed by students.

### **Enforcement**

Any communications or content published that cause damage to the school, students, 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. The 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.

### **Date of Initial Policy: June 2012**

Mrs CV Collett

Headteacher

Consultation log	
Draft 1: SLT and Teaching Staff	26 <sup>th</sup> June 2012
Draft 1: Teaching Assistants and Safeguarding Governor	25 <sup>th</sup> and 27 <sup>th</sup> June 2012
Chair of Governors	June 2012
All staff	September INSET 2012
Governors	October 2012

Signed:

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Mrs. CV Collett  
Headteacher

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Mrs. K Willgoose  
Chair of Governors

Date:

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