

# Malmsbury Primary School Social Media Policy



## Rationale.

Malmsbury Primary School recognises the importance of teachers, students and parents engaging, collaborating, learning and sharing through social media applications. These applications include, but are not limited to, Facebook, Twitter, Blogs, and other online tools through which people connect and share information. Malmsbury Primary School employs strategies to embed a strong organisational culture of child safety this includes everyone sharing the responsibility for keeping our students safe. Children have the right to be protected wherever they are, including their time at home, school and in other education and learning environments such as online.

## Aim

The aim of the Social Media Policy is to set standards of behaviour for the use of Social Media that are consistent with the values and expectations of Malmsbury Primary School. Malmsbury Primary School aims to protect the safety and wellbeing of students, teachers and the school community.

## Definitions

Social media refers to the means of interactions among people in which they create, share, and exchange information and ideas in virtual communities and networks. Social Media: refers to all social networking sites. These sites include, but are not limited to Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Google+, KIK, Instagram, SMS, YouTube and includes emails and mobile devices.

Please see appendix 1 for more detailed definitions.

## Implementation

- All members of the school community (students, parents and staff) are expected to uphold the values of the school in all Social Media interactions- Social Media is to be used in a respectful and responsible manner.
- Staff, students and parents will not act in such a way that the image of Malmsbury Primary School is brought into disrepute nor in a way that harms members of the school community. Social Media should not be used to insult, present offensive or inappropriate content or to misrepresent Malmsbury Primary School or any member of the school community.
- If there is a breach of the Malmsbury Primary School's Social Media Policy the school will undertake disciplinary action and will be dealt with on a case by case basis.
- All reports of cyberbullying and other technology misuses, will be investigated fully and may result in a notification to police where the school is required to do so.
- Staff will teach cyber safety awareness within the curriculum with guidance from relevant education authorities.
- Staff will teach and provide opportunities for students to engage with social media platforms within the curriculum with guidance from relevant education authorities.
- Parents will be responsible for being aware of and informed about their children's online activity and be proactive in the supervision and guidance of their children taking into account this policy and in particular the school's core values.
- The school will encourage parents to participate in classroom blogs and other Social Media tools as a way of opening up communication between students, parents and teachers.
- Parents, staff and other school community adults understand that their conduct online reflects not only our school community but also acts as a model for our students as well.

## STUDENT GUIDELINES

When using Social Media, students are expected to ensure that they:

- Read and agree to the terms and conditions of various social media sites as many of them have age restrictions for their use. E.g. Facebook, Instagram and Gmail are all restricted to those 13 years of age and above.
- Are aware of what they are posting online and that Social Media sites and applications are public forums.
- Are not permitted to join a staff member's areas on networking sites. If students attempt to do this, the member of staff is to refuse the student access and inform the Principal. The student's parents will be informed if this happens.
- Will not access social networking sites during the school working day without permission from a member of the School teaching staff.
- Do not post content that is hateful, threatening, pornographic, or incites violence against others.
- Respect the rights and confidentiality of others.
- Follow Malmsbury Primary School's code of conduct when writing online.
- Do not impersonate or falsely represent another person.
- Remain safe online and never give out personal information. This includes last names, phone numbers, addresses, exact birth dates and pictures.
- Do not bully, intimidate abuse, harass or threaten others.
- Do not make defamatory comments.
- Do not use offensive or threatening language or resort to personal abuse towards each other or members of the school community
- Do not harm the reputation of Malmsbury Primary School or those within its community
- Do not upload video, audio or photographs of any member of the school community (student, parents or staff) without seeking and gaining appropriate permission.
- Do not upload any video or photographs of any student where they can be identified as a Malmsbury Primary School student by their uniform or any other means.

## **PARENT GUIDELINES**

Parents should adhere to the following guidelines:

- Be aware that many Social Media sites have age restrictions that DO HAVE implications for their primary aged children. Eg Facebook, Instagram and Gmail are all restricted to those 13 years of age and above.
- Monitor their children's online social media activity, and read the terms and conditions of various Social Media sites and applications their children are interested in using.
- Be aware that they are in breach of terms and conditions if they set up a personal account for their children to use if they knowingly understand that age restrictions apply.
- Before uploading photos, audio or video, parents need to seek appropriate permission from any individual involved. This most particularly applies in relation to the privacy of the staff of Malmsbury Primary School.
- Online postings and conversations are not private. Do not share confidential information, internal school discussions, or specific information about students, staff or other parents.
- Be conscious of the fact that expert advice given is that all users of Social Media sites should do whatever they can to not identify any child by name or associate them with a particular school.
- Parents will be asked to sign a consent form for students when teachers set up social media activities for classroom for learning use.
- Parents will not attempt to destroy or harm any information online.
- Parents will not use classroom social media sites for any illegal activity, including violation of data privacy laws.
- Parents are highly encouraged to read and/or participate in social media activities. Parents should not distribute any information that might be deemed personal about other students participating in the social media activities. This includes photographs.

- Parents should not upload or include any information that does not also meet the student guidelines above.
- Parents should not participate in spreading false or unsubstantiated rumours or false information in regards to the Malmsbury Primary School community and its members.
- Parents assisting with classroom activities should not make use of social media sites while involved in such activities.

## **STAFF AND TEACHER GUIDELINES**

Social Media in relation to staff and teacher relates to blogs, wikis, podcasts, digital images and video, Facebook, instant messaging and mobile devices.

- Staff should not accept students as 'friends' on their own social network sites or interact with students on social networking sites.
- Staff and student online interaction must occur only in an educational context.
- Staff are advised to NOT accept ex-students or parents of current students as friends on personal Social Media sites.
- Staff must not discuss students or colleagues or publicly criticise school policies or personnel on social networking sites.
- While staff have permission to post photographs of students to the class blog they do not have permission to post details that would identify any child.
- Staff are personally responsible for content they publish online. Staff need to be mindful that what they publish will be public for a long time.
- Staff online behaviour should reflect the same standards of honesty, respect, and consideration consistent with the standards that apply on school premises and in accordance with the school's values and ethos.
- The lines between public and private, personal and professional are blurred in the online world. If staff identify themselves online as affiliated with Malmsbury Primary School then they need to be aware that they are by definition representing the entire school community. Staff should ensure that content associated with them is consistent with their work at the school and the school's values and ethos.
- Staff should not participate in spreading false or unsubstantiated rumours or false information in regards to the Malmsbury Primary School community and its members.
- When contributing online staff should not post confidential student information.

## **MANAGING CHANGE AND ISSUES ARISING**

- We acknowledge that technology changes rapidly. If any member of the Malmsbury Primary School community has a concern or question pertaining to Social Media or Social Networking sites, this should be directed to the Principal.
- Parents, students or staff who have a complaint or issue arise from Social Media should contact the principal.

## **Evaluation**

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's three-year review cycle.

Approved: **21 June 2017**

**To be reviewed 2020**

## APPENDIX 1 DEFINITIONS

*Social Media Social networking sites:* are websites that allow you to create a personal profile about yourself and then chat and share information with others such as family and friends.

*Video, audio and photo sharing websites:* are sites that allow you to upload and share videos, sounds and photos which can be viewed/heard by web users the world over eg, Flickr, YouTube, iTunes U, Vimeo, SoundCloud

*Blog:* A blog (short for web log) is a kind of online diary, where you regularly post about your life, your passions, business, news or other interests. It is a way of having your own space in the virtual world eg, WordPress, Blogger

*Microblogging apps:* are websites that post micro-blog like posts to announce what you are currently doing eg, Twitter, Tumblr

*Location-based apps:* (also known as Geolocation) are applications with the capability to detect and record where you and other people are located

*Wikis:* are websites where users create, edit and share information about a particular subject or topic eg, Wikipedia, Wikispaces

*Online gaming:* are games played over some form of computer network and are often based around a community of users eg, Steam

*News aggregation:* news aggregators provide a list of the latest news stories published by users from a range of different web sites eg, Digg

*Forums or message boards:* are online discussion sites where people can hold conversations in the form of posted messages

*Online multiplayer gaming platforms:* are multiplayer video games which are capable of supporting hundreds or thousands of players simultaneously and usually feature at least one persistent world (eg, World of Warcraft).